

DISSERTATIONS
ON THE ¹⁰⁹⁶
PROPHECIES
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT.
IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Contains all such Prophecies AS ARE APPLICABLE to
the COMING OF THE MESSIAH: THE RESTO-
RATION OF THE JEWS, AND THE RESUR-
RECTION OF THE DEAD: whether so applied by
JEWS or CHRISTIANS.

PART II.

Contains all such Prophecies as are applied to the MESSIAH
by CHRISTIANS only, but which are shewn not to be
APPLICABLE to the MESSIAH.

BY DAVID LEVI,
Author of LINGUA SACRA, the CEREMONIES of
the JEWS, &c. &c. &c.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

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DISSERTATION

PROPHET

OLD TESTAMENT

W. O. P. A. R. T. S.

322

THE COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE
HONOLULU, HAWAII

11. 7. 1947



DEDICATION

TO

DAVID HENRIQUES, ESQ.

OF SPANISH TOWN, JAMAICA.

SIR,

WHEN I resolved to take the liberty of
inscribing the following Work to you;
I did it in the confidence that your Zeal in
the cause of Truth, would lead you to ap-
prove my intention, and excuse the want of
abilities fully adequate to so arduous a Task.
If I have in any degree succeeded in pointing
out the true meaning of the sacred Prophe-
cies of the Old Testament, and in exposing
the

the many attempts to pervert their real sense,
I hope, I have thereby rendered an acceptable service to the religious World in general,
as well as yourself, for whom I shall ever
feel the utmost veneration and gratitude.

I remain, with due respect,

S I R,

Your most obliged,

Humble Servant,

D. LEVI.

Mile End New Town,

Oct. 15, 1793.

P R E F A C E.

IT is now upwards of twenty-five years, since I first entered on the task of examining the Prophecies of the Old Testament, which speak of our future restoration, &c.; but at that time, I had not the most distant idea, of ever laying the result of my researches before the Public: all that I then proposed to myself, was, to satisfy my own conscience, in regard to the truth of Revelation, and the religion of my ancestors: for I did not think it any merit to be a Jew, merely because I was so born, without being fully convinced of the truth of Judaism. I was always of opinion*, that every person

* As I observed in my Letters to Dr. Priestley, in answer to his Letters to the Jews.

endowed

endowed with ratiocination, ought to have a clear idea of the truth of revelation, and a true ground for his faith, as far as human wisdom can go: being convinced, that he who hath searched, and found just ground for his belief, will serve God with more fervour and true devotion, than him who receives his religion, as an inheritance.

It was these considerations that induced me to undertake the difficult task: the result of which, I now communicate to the Public, contrary to my original intention: induced by the following reflection.

I considered what I had been doing, as greatly tending to the true happiness of mankind in general, by preparing them for the reception of the knowledge of TRUTH; I was therefore determined if possible, to communicate the result of my enquiries to the Public at large. However, when I considered the importance of the subject, the abilities required for so great an undertaking: the obscurity of my condition, and how

how necessary a great name was to usher such a work into the world, in order to gain it a favourable reception, I was apalled: my resolution failed: and I gave up all thoughts of it at that time. But Dr. Priestley having addressed some Letters to the Jews, inviting them to an amicable discussion of the evidences of Christianity; and as none of our eminently learned men thought proper to enter the lists against him, I attempted to stand forth in honour of the LORD JEHOVAH, whose Name hath been profaned among the nations: and in my answer to the said Letters, observed*, “ But if you really are in earnest, and wish to convert the Jews to what you call Christianity, I think, you must produce more substantial proofs in support of your hypothesis, that what you have yet done. And, if I might presume to offer my opinion in so weighty a cause, I think, that the fairest method, and that which is

* Page 94, of the first Edition, and page 90, of the second and third Editions.

the likeliest to lead to conviction on either side, is, to take a review of all the Prophecies concerning the Messiah, from Moses to Malachi, and compare them with the acts recorded of Jesus in the New Testament; to see whether they have been fulfilled in his person, or not. This is the method I took myself to search for truth," &c. This fair, candid, and equitable scheme, I was in hopes, (considering the importance of the subject, as being so highly interesting to all mankind) would have been eagerly embraced by Dr. Priestley: But what was my surprise, when I perceived that, neither the Doctor, nor any of my other opponents, seemed inclined to adopt it. On the contrary, Dr. Priestley, in his Letters to the Jews, Part IId. in answer to mine, complains of my want of candour, ignorance of profane literature, and of *the New Testament*, &c. I therefore, in my reply to those Letters, again urged the necessity of adopting the aforesaid scheme. But to this, neither
Dr.

Dr. Priestley, nor any other of my antagonists, have hitherto thought proper to reply; yet, as I find, that Christians of all denominations highly approve of the attempt, and earnestly desire a publication of the said Dissertations; I now venture to lay the same before the impartial Public, requesting only a fair and candid perusal; as I flatter myself, that though I should not be so happy as to carry conviction home to every breast, I shall nevertheless, throw such light on the Prophecies of Sacred Writ, as will greatly strengthen the evidence of revealed religion, and promote the honour and glory of the ONE TRUE GOD.

D. LEVI.

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TRUE GOD

D. I. E. V. I.

OTTO

INTRODUCTION.

DEISM and Infidelity have made such large strides in the world, that they have at length reached even those of my own nation; many of whom are at this time so greatly infected with scepticism, by reading Bolingbroke, Hume, Voltaire, &c. that they scarcely believe in Revelation; much less have they any hope in our future restoration, &c. These, I would willingly reclaim, and save them from running headlong into ruin: and indeed, a greater service cannot be done to the religious world in general, than establishing the truth of Divine Revelation: which cannot be more effectually performed, than by proving the accomplishment of

events afore predicted : for which reason, the Prophet Isaiah, when speaking of the Messiah, observes thus in support of what he had just foretold*, “ The former predictions, lo ! they are to come to pass : and new events I now declare : before they spring forth, I make them known unto you.” In reality, nothing can be a stronger, or more convincing proof of the truth of prophecy, and the accomplishment of future events so foretold, than this position : for if the former prophecies were exactly fulfilled, it is an earnest of the completion of the future events so predicted.

That such predictions have been clearly foretold, and exactly accomplished, we shall shew presently.

In order to take away every cause of cavil from the Deist and Infidel, we shall not produce any that are liable to objection on account of their ambiguity, ; or the great distance of time that hath elapsed since their

* Ifai. xlii. 9. See also page 257.

completion : that they may not be able to make use of the old hackneyed objections, viz. that the facts were prior to the predictions, and that the prophecies were written after the Histories. Or, that they were nothing more than shrewed conjectures, founded upon extensive knowledge, long experience, and a series of probabilities. We therefore, shall only adduce such as are clear, and unequivocal ; and which have been so fully accomplished, as to strike the Deist and Infidel dumb.

In Leviticus chapter xxvith. and Deuteronomy chapter xxviiiith. Moses lays before the people at large, the blessings and the curses : the former for their obedience, and the latter for their disobedience. This he had already mentioned to them several times on different occasions ; always telling them, that they should be happy or miserable in the world, according as they were obedient, or disobedient to the Law which he had given them from God. A stronger proof
of

of the Divine original of the Mosaical dispensation than this, there cannot be; as we have seen how wonderfully remarkable the interposition of Providence hath been in their good and bad fortune: and how fully the truth of the prediction hath been attested by the whole series of their history, from their first entrance into the land of Canaan, to this present day.

But what I would principally insist upon, is the dreadful denunciations of Moses, relating to our dispersion, where he tells us we shall be scattered over the face of the earth, among all the nations, and yet continue a SEPARATE people, capable of being gathered together again in the latter days: whereas those great and powerful monarchies that spoiled us, are utterly destroyed, as foretold by Moses and the Prophets: for in Leviticus chapter xxvith. verse 44th. he says, " And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them
utterly

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xv

utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God*." And the Prophet Jeremiah observes, (chap. xxx. 11.) "For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make an end of thee; but I will correct thee†," &c. And Amos (chap. ix. 8.) says, "Behold, the eyes of the LORD God are upon the sinful kingdom; and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations; as (one that) sifteth (corn) with a sieve: and a grain shall not fall upon the ground." That is, the collective body of the nation shall not be destroyed, as will be shewn at large in the explanation of that prophecy.

Thus we see that, although Moses and

* See also Deut. iv. 31.

† See also chap. xlv. 28.

the

the Prophets assure us, that they shall be scattered among all nations, and sorely afflicted; yet should they not be utterly destroyed, as was the case of the other nations; as we see it fully verified at this day. And now, I fain would ask, how it was possible that Moses, without Divine inspiration, could foresee that, the dreadful punishments which he had denounced against them, should be so fully accomplished, as they are allowed on all hands to be: because a number of accidents might have arisen, to prevent their completion, which no human foresight could have foreseen. As for instance, the greatest part of our sufferings have arisen from the persecutions which we have suffered from Christians, on account of the difference of religion, and the charge brought against us for crucifying the lord of life, and saviour of the world. Now, if this had not taken place, it is most propable that, we should not have suffered such cruel and dreadful persecutions, &c. as we have experienced.

Again,

Again, how could he foresee, but that the nation, after its being driven out of its own country, scattered in all parts, and suffering such misery, might not thereby be induced entirely to abandon Judaism; and so fall in with the religion of the different countries, where they were dispersed: and thus become incorporated with them, and entirely swallowed up among them; as has been the case of the greatest monarchies. Indeed, nothing could, or would be more probable: for as to what some Deists (who when driven from one entrenchment, retire into another, and from that into a third; and all along behave like an adversary who fights, not with the hopes of success, but for the vain glory of not yielding till he can hold out no longer) pretend, that the law he gave them, which contained the prohibition of meats, intermarriages with other nations, &c. is the sole cause of it, is puerile, and carries its own confutation with it. Because, as I have observed, how was he sure, that as well

as they fell into idolatry, and other enormous crimes, they would not violate these prohibitory precepts, whose transgression was so much less heinous; and thus be mingled among the nations: for surely nothing else could in all human probability be expected; considering what they have suffered during this long and dreadful captivity; for I am free to assert, no nation ever suffered the like, during a space of almost eighteen hundred years. But Moses, contrary to all human foresight, informs us that, notwithstanding the severe, and almost unparalleled chastisements that they should experience, yet, should they still be preserved a distinct nation. How exactly all this hath been fulfilled to this very day, need not be insisted upon; as it is visible to every eye, and manifest to the meanest capacity; although a period of upwards of three thousand years hath elapsed since the delivery of this prophecy. I therefore would fain ask the Deist, Whether it was possible that Moses, or any other person could

could foresee such a wonderful event by any human means whatever; or how he can account for it, on any other scheme, than that of divine prescience?

If we enter into particulars, we shall find that, all the punishments which he denounced against them, have been so exactly fulfilled in every particular, that it is no wonder, if infidels were to say, as above observed, that the facts were prior, &c. If therefore, the accomplishment of the preceding prophecy, which may properly be called, a standing miracle, even to this very day, the like of which hath never been seen or heard of in the world, should not be able to convince unbelievers, how can we expect that, any other argument should, how strong soever? But, as I would not by any means, omit adducing any argument that may serve to illustrate the subject, or tend to carry conviction home to the doubting and wavering mind; I shall just take a brief view of the

accomplishment of some of the most remarkable of these denunciations.

He tells them, that numbers of them shall be destroyed. “ And ye shall be left few in number,” &c. This, not to mention the other slaughters and massacres which they have suffered, was fully verified in the last siege of Jerusalem, when invested by Titus; when, as Josephus says†, an infinite multitude perished by famine: for he computes that, during the whole siege, the number of those that were destroyed by that and the sword, amounted to eleven hundred thousand, as the people were assembled from all parts to celebrate the passover: and Basnage, gives us an account of one million, three hundred and thirty-nine thousand, six hundred and ninety persons, that were destroyed in Jerusalem, and other parts of Judea, exclusive of ninety-nine thousand two hundred, taken prisoners, as he has collected from the ac-

* Deut. xxviii. 62.

† Bell. Juda. Lib. VI. Cap. 3. Sect. 3.

counts of Josephus*. Indeed, there is not a nation upon earth, that hath suffered such a number of massacres and persecutions: their history abounds with little else: and if God had not promised them his particular protection, the whole race, would long ere this have been extirpated: for as Basnage observes †, “ Here is also another circumstance, that heightens this prodigy. This forlorn and persecuted nation can scarce find one place in the universe to rest their heads, or to set their feet in. They have waded through floods of their own blood, and are as yet preserved. That infinite number of *Jews*, which we shall see hereafter murdered through a cruel and barbarous zeal, weakened, but did not destroy that nation. For notwithstanding the joint persecutions of Christians and Idolators, who designed their ruin, they are still in being.”

He also told them, “ And ye shall be

* History of the Jews, Book I. Chap. viii. Sect. 19. p. 58. Note.

† Ibid. chap. i. page 2.

plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it*." This is most singular, and really worthy of observation, that even before they had entered the land to take possession of it, he assures them, that if they disobeyed the LORD's commandments, they should be plucked off from it. Now, I defy any one to produce an instance of a Legislator ever staking his reputation thus: and the exact manner it hath been fulfilled, is clear from their history; for they were indeed plucked off from their own land, when the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of Assyria; and of whom we know nothing certain to this hour: and when the other two tribes were carried captive to Babylon: but more especially, when their city and temple were destroyed, and the nation carried captive by the Romans.

From that time to this, their country hath been in the possession of foreign lords and masters, few Jews living in it; and those of

* Deut. xxviii. 63.

a low and poor condition. A celebrated Jew of the twelfth century*, who travelled into all parts to visit his brethren, and inform himself of the exact state of their affairs, acquaints us that Jerusalem was almost entirely abandoned by the Jews: for he did not find there, above two hundred persons†, who were mostly dyers of wool; the monopoly of which trade, they purchased every year. They all lived together under David's tower, and made very little figure. In other parts, he found one or two in a city, in another twenty, in others more; and in many none at all. An accurate and faithful English traveller‡, who had been in the holy land says, that, "It is for the most part, now inherited by Moors and Arabians; those possessing the valleys, and these the mountains. Turks there be few: but many Greeks with other Christians of all sects and nations, such as impute to the place an adherent holiness.

* Benjamin of Tudela in Spain.

† Benjamin Itiner. page 41.

‡ Sandy's Travels, Book III, page 114.

Here

Here be also some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land, but in their own country do live as aliens."

He also informs them, that they should be scattered among all nations; "And thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth *." Again, "And the LORD shall scatter thee among all the people, from one end of the earth even unto the other†." This indeed, hath been most amply fulfilled since the great dispersion of the Jews by the Romans. For what people have been scattered so far and wide as they? and where is the nation that is a stranger to them, or to which they are strangers? They swarm in many parts of the east, are spread through most of the countries of Europe and Africa, are pretty numerous in the West Indies, and there are several families of them in America. They circulate, as a Christian author says, (Bishop Newton) through all parts where

* Deut. xxviii. 25.

† Ibid. 64.

trade and money circulate; and are as I may say, the brokers of the whole world.

But though they were to be thus dispersed; yet he assured them that, they should not be totally destroyed, (as already mentioned page 14) "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies," &c.* On this, an author of great note†, observes, "And what a marvellous thing is it, that after so many wars, battles, and sieges; after so many fires, famines, and pestilences; after so many rebellions, massacres, and persecutions; after so many years of captivity, slavery, and misery, they are not *destroyed utterly*, and though scattered among all people, yet subsist as a distinct people by themselves: where is there any thing comparable to this to be found in all the histories, and in all the nations under the sun?

But though they should not be utterly destroyed, yet should they suffer much, and not have rest long in any place. "And

* Levit. xxvi. 44.

† Basnage.

among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest*." This hath indeed been fully verified, for they have been so far from finding rest, that they have been banished from place to place, from country to country. In many places, they have been banished, and recalled, and banished again. We shall just take notice of some of their great banishments in modern times, from countries well known. About the latter end of the thirteenth† century, they were banished from England by Edward I.‡ and were not permitted to return and settle there again, till Cromwell's time, or rather under Charles the second. In the latter end of the fifteenth century, as Mariana observes §, they were banished from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella: and according to his account, there were seventy thousand fa-

* Deut. xxviii. 65.

† Basnage, Book VII. Chap. xix. Sect. 20, &c.

‡ Some say it was Henry III.

§ Basnage, Book VII. Chap. xxi.

milics,

milies, or eight hundred thousand persons, that left Spain upon the execution of this edict. Some* reckon an hundred and twenty thousand families. They were indeed received in Portugal by John II. but he made them pay a dear price for a refuge; and a few years after, they were banished by his successor Emanuel; who violated his faith with them, "By depriving them of the liberty to carry away their children under fourteen years of age, which reduced them to that despair, that some of them killed themselves, and others sacrificing nature to their religion, turned executioners to their own bowels†." This leads us to what Moses says, concerning their children, "Thy sons and thy daughters *shall be* given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail *with longing* for them all the day long: and *there shall be* no might in thine hand‡."

* Abarbanal. Cordoso las Excellencias, &c.

† Bafn. Book VII. Chap. xxi. Sect. 25.

‡ Deut. xxviii. 32.

How exactly hath all this been fulfilled in several countries; but especially in Spain and Portugal, where they formerly were so numerous; their children were there taken from them by order of the government, to be educated in the Popish religion; as mentioned in the first prophecy of Moses, page 32. And Basnage * observes, that the fourth council of Toledo ordered that all their children should be forced from them, for fear they should partake of their errors; and that they should be shut up in monastries, to be instructed in the Christian truths. He adds, “ We shall see in the sequel the lamentable effects of these rapes.” And it has been shewn under the preceding head, that when they were banished from Portugal, all their children under fourteen years of age, were taken from them, and baptized. A practice not at all justifiable adds the Historian †.

* Hist. of the Jews, Book VII. Chap. xiii, Sect. 14.

† Mariana, Book XXVI, Chap. vi.

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He also tells them, that they shall be oppressed and spoiled continually. “ And thou shalt be only oppressed, and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee *,” &c. Now it is well known what frequent seizures have been made of their effects, in almost all countries, either to supply the necessities of the state, or the luxury of the prince : How often have they been fined and fleeced by almost all governments ? How often have they been forced to redeem their lives by sums extorted from them ? The instances are innumerable. I shall just mention what an English historian † says, that Henry III. “ Always polled the Jews at every low ebb of his fortunes. One Abraham, who was found delinquent, was forced to pay seven hundred marks for his redemption. Aaron, another Jew, protested that the king had taken from him at times, thirty thousand marks of silver, besides two hundred marks

* Deut. xxviii. 29.

† Kennet. Vol. I. page 179.

of gold, which he had presented to the queen."

And in the year 1240, when the king attempted to fleece them to the utmost, a most respectable author observes*, that he "commanded *all* the Jews of both sexes throughout *England*, to be imprisoned, till they would make a discovery of their wealth: which he appointed officers to receive in every county, and return to his *Exchequer*. Many of them, no doubt, pleaded poverty, or pretended to have given up all: but as the *Tyrant* was in earnest to have their last farthing, he extorted it by the most cruel torments."

Stow says, that the generality of them had one eye put out. And Matthew Paris† tells us, that from one particular *Jew* at *Bristol*, the king demanded no less than ten thousand marks of silver, (a prodigious sum in those days!) which being resolutely denied

* See *Anglia Judaica*, p. 70.

† *Matth. Paris*, and *Stow*, anno 1210.

him,

him, he commanded one of his great teeth to be pulled out daily, till he consented. The poor man had the courage to hold out seven operations, but then, sinking under the pain, ransomed the remainder of his teeth, at the price demanded. And when they were banished in the reign of Edward I. their estates, &c. were confiscated, which brought immense sums to the crown. Thus have they been served, almost every where; a plain demonstration of the full accomplishment of this prediction.

In verse 34th. he says, "Thou shalt be mad, for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." And have we not seen into what madness and desperation they have been driven by the oppressions, extortions, and cruel usage they have experienced? Have they not in mere fury and desperation destroyed themselves, their wives and children? Josephus * mentions, that after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the Jews took re-

* Joseph. De Bell. Jud. Lib. VII. Cap. viii. et ix.

fuge in the castle of Nasada, where being closely besieged by the Romans, they, by the persuasion of their leader Eleazer, first murdered their wives and children; after which, they chose ten men by lot to slay the rest; when this was done, they chose one of the ten to kill the other nine in like manner; which having performed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty, who perished in this miserable manner. Instances of the like behaviour hath often occurred since; I shall only take notice of one mentioned in English history. When in the reign of Richard I. the people rose in arms to make a general massacre of them, fifteen hundred of them retired into York castle*, where being closely besieged, they offered to capitulate, and to ransom their lives with money. The offer being refused, one of them cried in despair, That it was better *to die courageously for the*

* Bafnage, Book VII. Chap. x. Sect. 20. p. 638: who for his authority quotes Matth. Paris, p. 111, and Polyd. Virgil. L. 14. p. 248. See also Anglia Judaica, p. 25.

Law, than to fall into the hands of the Christians. Every one immediately took his knife and stabbed his wife and children. The men afterwards retired into the king's palace, and set it on fire, in which they consumed themselves, with the palace and furniture.

He tells them, that in this dreadful captivity, they shall serve other gods. "And thou shalt serve other gods, wood and stone*." Again, "And there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known †," &c. This hath been exactly fulfilled during this woeful captivity, when the Jews in Spain, Portugal, and other countries, were obliged to comply with the idolatrous worship of the Church of Rome, &c. and to bow down to stocks and stones, rather than have their effects siezed and confiscated, or their persons murdered by the inquisition, &c. which has caused such a

* Deut. xxviii. 36.

† Ibid. 64.

number to apostatize, &c. as already mentioned *.

In verse 37th, he tells them, "And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee." Hath not this been fulfilled, and as we may say, is fulfilling every day? Is not the pretended avarice, usury, and heart-hardness of a Jew become proverbial? Is it not said, that their very countenances commonly distinguish them from the rest of mankind? And has not a great master of nature, drawn the portrait of a Jew, in a most detestable character, in his Jew of Venice? Do not Heathens, Christians, and Mahometans, however they may differ in other points, yet agree in abusing, vilifying, and persecuting the Jews? And has not a Christian writer † of our own time, vilified them in a most unwarrantable manner? although it is well known that, there is

* Page 28, Note 2d.

† The Right Honourable Edmund Burke,

not a people on earth, more friendly and favourable to a monarchical government, or more obedient to their rulers than they are? Yet, are they treated in all respects, as if they were of another species.

He also tells them, that, "The LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance *," &c. And have not their calamities been of long continuance? Have they not continued upwards of seventeen hundred years? Their former captivities were very short in comparison of this: besides the time of their redemption was well known and ascertained: and during the Babylonish captivity, they had Prophets† among them, who exhorted and comforted them; but during this long and dreadful captivity, there is not one true Prophet among them, to inform them of the end of their calamities; as the Psalmist says, "We see not our signs, (there is) no more any Prophet,

* Deut. xxviii. 59.

† Ezekiah and Daniel.

neither (is there) among us any that knoweth how long *." In their former captivities, they had the consolation of being together in one place: in Egypt, they dwelt together in the land of Goshen; and they were all carried together to Babylon; but at present they are scattered all over the face of the earth. What nation hath ever suffered so much, and yet continued so long? What nation hath subsisted as a distinct people even in their own country, so long as these have done, though dispersed in all countries, without having any place they can call their own? And what a standing miracle is this, thus exhibited to the view and observation of the whole world?

Lastly, he tells them, that they shall be carried into Egypt again, and exposed to sale as slaves, but there would not be any to purchase them. "And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again †, in ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, thou

* Psalm. lxxiv. 9.

† Verse 68th.

shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bond-men and bond-women, and no man shall buy you."

This, is a striking contrast to what happened to them when Moses brought them out of Egypt; for then, they came out in a triumphant manner, as mentioned Exod. xiv.

8. "And the children of Israel went out with an high hand." But now, he says, they shall return thither as slaves. This was fully accomplished: for it appears from Josephus*, that in the reign of the two first Ptolemies, a number of Jews were slaves in Egypt. And when Jerusalem was taken by Titus†, he sent many of the captives, who were above seventeen years of age, bound to the works in Egypt: those under seventeen, were sold; but so little care was taken of these captives, that eleven thousand of them perished for want. The markets were so overstocked with them, that as Josephus

* Joseph. Ant. Lib. XII. Cap. 1. et 2.

† Bell. Jud. Lib. VI. Cap. viii. Sect. 2. page 1288, &c.

says

says elsewhere, they were sold with their wives and children at the lowest price. Thus also were the words of the Psalmist verified*, “Thou sellest thy people for nought,” &c. as will be shewn in the ninth prophecy of Isaiah. And Bishop Newton says, that St. Jerome observes, “That after their last overthrow by Adrian, many thousands of them were sold; and those that could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck, or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants.” All which, is a manifest proof of the accomplishment of this remarkable denunciation, in every particular.

These are manifest proofs of prophecies: of prophecies delivered above three thousand years ago: and which we nevertheless plainly see fulfilling in the world at this very time: and what stronger proofs can we have, or desire, of the Divine Legation of Moses? For what Legislator durst ever attempt to

* Psalm. xlv. 13.

stake his credit thus, by denouncing such severe denunciations against a nation for disobedience of religious ceremonies only: for as to what Deists assert, that any wise and intelligent lawgiver might easily foresee that, the observance of the judicious laws instituted by him, would tend to make a nation flourish, and that the rejection of them would lead to their ruin, is futile: because such foresight could at any rate only comprehend political institutions; and therefore, the non observance of such, might end in the loss of their liberty, or the subversion of their government; and which might easily be foreseen. But even this, was not always the consequence; for although we find, that the Lacedemonians did not make so great a figure, after they had fallen from the observation of the rules which Lycurgus (whose sole aim was to train them to war) had enjoined them; because they could not then make war against, conquer, and command all those round them; yet we find, that the
Romans

Romans on the contrary, advanced their state to the highest pitch of glory, after they had changed the constitution from what it was in Numa's days; whose only concern was, that Rome should continue in peace and amity. Whence it is manifest that Moses, could never have foreseen by any human sagacity, the calamities which have befallen them, as the consequence of the transgression of laws purely religious: as it is impossible, according to the laws of nature, that a nation, as a collective body, and state of government, should be happy or miserable merely for the sake of religious institutions, whose object was not peace or war: and yet, we see with what exactness these *particular* predictions have been fulfilled. Can we then in reason any longer doubt of the Divine Mission of Moses? I really know not, how these instances may affect others, but for my own part, I must freely acknowledge, that they not only convince, but astonish and amaze me, beyond utterance. They are indeed, what

what Moses predicted they should be, a sign and a wonder for ever, as he says, in chap. xxviii. 45, 46. "Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments, and his statutes which he commanded thee. And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever." For they are a sign of their rebellion against God, and a wonder of their preservation, amidst all those dreadful calamities which they have suffered for so many hundred years.

I cannot omit mentioning one thing more, in support of the truth of the Divine dispensation of Moses. The modern philosophers, such as Voltaire, &c. take a pride in representing the Jews, as an ignorant, stupid, and barbarous nation, compared with the more polished nations of antiquity. Let us now for a moment grant the truth of their
from F assertion,

assertion, it of course will follow that, from a people so ignorant, stupid, and unpolished, as they are represented to be, we naturally should not expect to find sentiments and doctrines far superior to any thing of the kind that we find among the most improved nations.

Now, it is well known, that the most antient nations, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Tyrians, &c. were the neighbours of the Jews, and completely surrounded them. These were all sunk into the most gross and stupid idolatry: for they worshipped not only the Sun, Moon, and Stars; which they supposed to be animated, and on whose influence they imagined their good and bad fortunes depended: but dead men, heroes, &c. Jupiter, Venus, Adonis, &c. as also animals, insects, and even onions. It therefore is requisite to enquire, how the Jews thus surrounded by these nations, became possessed of such just and sublime conceptions with respect to the Deity; and the
most

most exalted idea of his pure UNITY, as inculcated in the writings of Moses: and where could they have learned such rational worship? A worship confined to one invisible, Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent Being; the Maker and Governor of all things, visible and invisible; from whom the Sun, Moon, Stars, and every thing else derived their existence, and in whose power it is to dispose of them as he pleases. It is clear they could not have learned it from these nations, nor any other, because their religion was so essentially different from that of any other nation in the ancient world: for they all, without exception, practised the most impure, as well as the most cruel rites in honour of their gods; and their public festivals in general, were scenes of riot and debauchery.

Many of their ceremonies were most horribly barbarous. Their priests cut and mangled themselves, in a most horrid manner, and practised the most dreadful mortifica-

tions in the course of their worship. Innocent children were not spared by their parents, who madly devoted them to the most cruel death; that of burning them alive, either to appease the wrath, or secure the favour of their gods. They also practised many shocking indecencies, not proper to be recited; women, in other respects chaste, were taught, that prostitution (in which the choice of a partner was not thought of, as being totally excluded) a necessary mode of recommending themselves to the favour and protection of their deities. This being the case, of which, we have the most unexceptionable evidence of both Greeks and Romans: and as every *effect* must have an adequate *cause*, I wish the modern philosophers would inform me, how they can account for the phenomena of a little *Jewish horde*, as Voltaire delights to call them, being thus possessed of the true knowledge of the One living and Eternal God, his Providence,

Providence, &c. while the learned, polished, and civilized nations, were sunk in the most gross, barbarous, and stupid idolatry, unless they had received the knowledge thereof by Divine Revelation*.

* If it were necessary, I could prove from the whole tenour of the Mosaical dispensation, in particular from the precepts of the law, &c. that these institutions could be none other than divine.

ERRATA.

- Page 7, line 2, of the note, for proposition *read* preposition:
- 24, l. 7. for remove, *r.* removed.
 - Ibid. l. 12, *r.* years in Roman.
 - 52, l. 5, from bottom, after it *r.* to.
 - 54, l. 11, for afflicted, *r.* inflicted.
 - 55, l. 8, for rolloration, *r.* restoration.
 - 64, l. 2, from b. for he, *r.* be.
 - 142, l. 7, from b. for opposite, *r.* apposite.
 - 169, l. 1, for off from, *r.* from off.
 - 186, l. 1, after think, *dele*, the comma, and place it after requisite.
 - 215, l. 3, after mate, *place* the marks of a quotation:
 - 216, l. 4, from b. for nation, *r.* nations.
 - 221, l. 5, from b. for beast, *r.* beasts.
 - 225, l. 8, from b. for murmer, *r.* murmur.
 - 227, l. 8, for sceptism, *r.* scepticism.
 - Ibid. l. 13, for walk, *r.* walking.
 - 241, l. 7, after Prophet, *dele*, then and comma.
 - 287, l. 6, for vax, *r.* wax.
 - 295, l. 6, from b. for is, *r.* his.

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DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

PROPHECIES.

DISSERTATION I.

The Prophecy of Balaam.

THE first who prophesied concerning the future restoration and salvation of the Jews, was BALAAM the son of Beor : for, although he was originally a diviner, or soothsayer*, yet, was God pleased to endow him with the spirit of prophecy, that he might prophesy good concerning Israel, declare God's superintendence and government of the world ; and promulgate among the Heathen his wonderful works with his chosen peo-

* Joshua xiii. 22.

ple*. The prophecies of Balaam afford a manifest proof of the particular providence of

* Bishop Newton observes, (Dissertations on the Prophecies, Article Baalam) that "the gift of Prophecy was not always confined to the chosen seed." But this, is far from truth: for except in the instance now before us, and for which, I think I have assigned a sufficient reason, more especially, as the prophecy thus delivered, so highly concerned the Jewish nation, and after the delivery of which, he prophesied no more, I am confident to assert, that the gift of prophecy was entirely confined to the chosen seed, as may be clearly perceived from the whole tenour of the Old Testament. As to what he has observed, concerning God's revealing himself to Abimelech and Pharaoh, is not conclusive; because, there is a great and wide difference, between God's revealing himself in a dream to Abimelech or Pharaoh, merely to inform them of their crime, and the injury they were attempting to do to his servant Abraham, who was a true prophet, and the endowment of the gift of prophecy. As to Nebuchadnezzar, Scripture is clear in calling it a dream; and which was so far from the gift of prophecy, that he neither knew the interpretation of the dream, nor the dream itself, till informed of both, by the prophet Daniel, who was of the chosen seed. What he farther observes, (Dissertations, Vol. I. page 66.) "Neither was there any necessity that the prophets should always be good men," &c. scarcely deserves notice, as the examples cited, are so palpably contradictory to truth, and sacred writ; for in no part of Scripture, do we find an instance of unworthy persons being endowed with the gift of prophecy; neither did Aaron and Miriam mutiny against Moses, nor rebel against God. The disobedience of Jonah, was not the consequence of his unworthiness, but a sudden impulse, the consequence of a tender affection, and solicitude for his brethren,

of God over his people, and his peculiar love towards them: for what could be a greater honour to them, than that a prophet called from another country, an immoral man, and one who came with a full intent to curse them for the sake of lucre, should be obliged to bless them, prophesy of their future happiness, and bear testimony to their holiness. It is in fact, as the learned Abarbanal observes, the commendation of an enemy among enemies, which is a commendation indeed.

The prophecy I purpose treating of, as applicable to the coming of the Messiah, &c. is the last of those he delivered, beginning, "Balaam, the son of Beor hath said," chap. xxiv. verse 15, till the end of verse 24.

It must be observed, that Balaam delivered four prophecies concerning Israel, each one referring to a period of time more remote than the former, and more approximate to

brethren, as being apprehensive that the Heathen might pay more attention to his admonitions than what the Jews did, and which might be the cause of bringing a heavy punishment upon them, as I shall shew at large in my Comment on Scripture, in which I shall also take notice of the case of the two prophets of Samaria, which the Bishop has stated, but of which he does not seem to have had a just conception.

the latter days. For in the first, he shews the noble descent of the nation from the ancient patriarchs, that they were God's portion, his chosen people, and his inheritance from the days of their ancestors; that they therefore multiplied in a most extraordinary and wonderful manner, without the junction of any other people; and were ordained to the participation of immortality. All which, he expressed in verse 9, and 10, of chapter xxiii.

For in verse 8, he says, "How shall I curse those whom God hath not cursed; or how shall I raise indignation against whom the LORD hath no indignation?" Having thus shewn that it was not in his power to curse those whom God so highly favoured, he in verse 9, explains the reason of that favour: "Because I see him sprung from the ancient rocks, and from the hills I behold him." That is, I see him derive his descent from the ancient patriarchs and matrons, whose faith was as firm as the rocks. In this manner, he shews the descent of Israel; and it is really worthy of observation, that the prophet Isaiah makes use of the very same image of a rock, to shew the descent of

of the nation*. “Look unto the rock, from whence ye were hewn; and to the hollow of the cave, whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father; and unto Sarah who bore you.”

Having thus shewn the descent of the nation, he farther observes, that that descent was pure, without any mixture of other nations†, “Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” But, as it might be inferred, that by their being thus separated from all other nations, their number would be extremely small, he observes, that they were very numerous‡. “Who can count the dust of Jacob, and number the fourth *part* of Israel?” He then proceeds to shew that they would inherit immortality, in the following sentence§: “Let my soul die the death of the righteous *amongst them*, and let my latter end be like his.”

In the second, he foretells the victories which the Israelites should gain over the Canaanites, &c. their possession and quiet enjoyment of the land afterwards: their vir-

* Isai. li. 1.

† Ibid.

‡ Numb. xxiii. 9.

§ Ibid. 10.

tue and righteousness, and their enjoyment of the gift of prophecy. This he declares in verse 21, 23, and 24. For in regard of their piety he says, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." In verse 23, he speaks of the gift of prophecy, observing, "Surely *there is* no enchantment in Jacob, neither is there any divination in Israel, for as at this time, *so* shall it be said to Jacob and Israel what God hath wrought." That is, they surely have no occasion to use enchantments, and divinations, as other nations do, in order to be informed of future events, or the will of God, for as they are at present informed thereof by means of the gift of prophecy to Moses*, so shall they continue to be thus informed, either by the spirit of prophecy, or by means of the Urim and Thumim, as was actually the case during all the time that they continued in the land, prior to the Babylonish captivity.

In verse 24, he speaks of their victories, "Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he

* Vide Numb. ix. 8. xxvii. 5. xxxvi. 5, &c.

shall

shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain."

In the third prophecy, he speaks of a remoter period of time: for he there declares that they should have a king who should be exalted above Agag, which clearly points out Saul, who overcame Agag, king of the Amalekites; and that their kingdom should be still more exalted; and which denotes the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon, and the building of the temple; as in chap. xxiv. verse 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, *and* thy tabernacles, O Israel!" In this verse, he speaks of the temple, and the different tabernacles, where the ark rested before it was brought to Jerusalem. In verse 7, he speaks of the exaltation of their kingdom, "And his king shall be higher than *Agag, and his kingdom shall be *still* exalted," &c. &c.

* The מ of מֵאֲגַג does not properly form the comparative, but denotes the same as the proposition מִן, from; and is what the Hebrew Grammarians call מֵ. הֵאֱמַן i. e. denoting time: so that the meaning of the expression is, His king shall begin to be exalted FROM THE TIME OF AGAG; that is, from the time of Saul the first king of Israel, who overcame Agag; and that his kingdom should still be more exalted, &c.

We

We now come to the fourth prophecy, in which he foretells the coming of the Messiah, and the restoration of the Jewish nation to their own land. And as this was not to be accomplished, till the latter days, he therewith consoles Balak, by informing him, that he would not at present receive any injury from this people, for that the thorough subjection of Moab by them, would not take place till the latter days. And as this embraced, so great a distance of time, he ushers it in with great solemnity, by a remarkable preface, “ Balaam the son of Beor, &c. who heareth the words of God, and is made acquainted with the purpose of the Most High, who seeth the vision of the Almighty, falling down in a trance, but having his eyes open.” He here shows that his visions were real prophecies; and although he was so far overpowered by the force of the vision, that his corporeal faculties were deprived of their proper functions, yet, his intellectual powers were in full force; which he beautifully describes by the *falling down in a trance, but having his eyes open**.

And

* This is the real meaning of the Hebrew, into the true spirit

And as he clearly saw the vision with his intellectual eye, he makes use of that image to shew the nature of his prophecy; and therefore observes, "I see him, but not now: I view him, but not nigh." That is, I plainly see the thing I foretell, although it doth not yet exist, and I have a clear view of it, although it is to be at such a distance of time. "A star shall come forth from Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, who shall smite the corners of Moab, and break down the walls of all the children of Sheth."

He here informs Balak of the entire subjection of Moab to the Israelites; and not only Moab, but the whole world, for all mankind are included in the general term, the children of Sheth; for the posterity of Cain, and all Adam's other sons, perished in the deluge, so that the line of Sheth only, was preserved in Noah and his family.

By the breaking down of the wall, he shewed their utter subjection, and the entire subversion of their kingly power, and dispirit of which, Bishop Newton seems not to have entered; and which is the cause of his giving a false translation of the expression.

ferent forms of government by the Messiah, agreeable to what the prophet Isaiah says *, “The lofty looks of men shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of mortals shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.”

He then speaks of the subjection of Edom, “And Edom shall be *his* † possession, Seir also shall be *his* possession, *being* his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly.” In this verse, he shews the entire subjection of Edom, and for which he assigns a strong reason, viz. אֹיְבָיו his enemies; that is, because Edom was the enemy of Israel, they therefore are to have the entire possession of his country. And it is really worthy of observation, that the prophet Obadiah describes Israel’s taking possession of the territories of Edom, in nearly the same words ‡. “And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, &c. and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. And *they* of the south shall possess the mount of Esau, &c. And saviours shall go up on Mount Zion to judge the mount

* Isai. ii. 11. 17.

† Israel’s.

‡ Obad. i. 17, &c.

of Esau." And thus says Balaam, "Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and he shall destroy the remnant out of the city." In this manner, we may plainly perceive, how one prophecy supports the other, and both strengthen the truth of revelation.

From Edom, he turned to Amalek, "And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek *was* the first of the nations *that warred against Israel*, but his latter end *shall be* that he perish for ever."

He then took notice of the Kenites, "And he looked on the Kenites; and took up his parable, and said, "Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou hast put thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, *for* how long will it take Ashur to carry thee away captive?" That is, notwithstanding the strength of thy situation, when God hath appointed thy captivity, it will not cost Ashur much time to carry thee away captive.

Before I proceed, it will be proper to enquire, who it is, that is meant by the Kenites, as commentators are greatly divided on the subject. Several of the Jewish com-

mentators are of opinion, that these Kenites were the descendants of Jethro, Moses's father-in-law. See Judg. i. 16. and 1 Sam. xv. 6. And I find, that Bishop Newton was also of this opinion: for though he observes, (Vol. I. page 83) "There are Kenites mentioned (Genesis xv. 19.) among the Canaanitish nations, whose land was promised unto Abraham; and Le Clerc imagines that *those* Kenites were the people here intended." Yet, he farther observes, "But the Canaanitish nations are not the subject of Balaam's prophecies; and the Canaanitish nations were to be rooted out, but *these* Kenites were to continue as long as the Israelites themselves," &c. And therefore, he is of opinion, that *these* Kenites were the descendants of Jethro, Moses's father-in-law. But the learned Abarbanal is of opinion, that the *Kenite* here mentioned, is one of the ten nations promised by God to Abraham, as mentioned in Gen. xv. 19. "The Kenites, and the Kennizzites, and the Kadmonites." These three nations, the children of Israel did not subdue, (as will be shewn hereafter) when they entered the land of Promise, and which has led

led Bochart to observe*, that, “ Those *Kenites*, as well as the *Kenizzites*, became extinct in the interval of time which passed between Abraham and Moses, being not mentioned by Joshua in the division of the land, nor reckoned among the nations conquered by him.” But the truth of the matter is, that the *Kenite*, *Kenizzite*, and *Kadmonite*, denote *Ammon*, *Moab*, and *Edom*, as held by our Rabbins. The proofs that may be adduced in favour of this, are many. I shall just notice a few. In the first place, we find, that Balaam mentions Edom and Moab, but is silent as to what regards Ammon; and as he mentions all those who were to be finally subjected by Israel, at the time of the Messiah, it is more than probable, that by the *Kenite*, he meant Ammon; although, for reasons unknown to us, he called them by the name mentioned in Genesis†. Secondly, we find that God tells Moses, that he

* Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36. col. 397.

† And in this sense, the Chaldee Paraphrast Onkelas seems to understand it: for he hath both in Genesis, and here in Numbers, translated קני The *KENITE*, שלמה Shal-maah: which is a manifest proof, that he considered them as one and the same nation; and of course, confirms the explanation here given.

will

will not give the children of Israel any part of the land of Edom, Ammon and Moab*, which it is probable they expected, as included in the promise made to Abraham; because, as Moses says†, it was also accounted the land of the רפאים Rephaim, the giants: it was therefore necessary for God to tell Moses, that he would not give them any part thereof at that time. Thirdly, these three nations are expressly mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, as the future conquest of the Israelites in the days of the Messiah, as mentioned chap. xi. 14. "On Edom and Moab they shall lay their hand; and the children of Ammon shall obey them." From all which, I presume, it is manifest, that the Kenite here mentioned, is the same as promised to Abraham, as one of the nations who were to be finally subdued or destroyed in the days of the Messiah.

In verse 24, he proceeds, "And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Ashur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever." By the ships of Chittim, he pointed out the Romans, who were to afflict Ashur, or properly the Assy-

* Deut. ii. 5, &c.

† Ibid. xi. 20, &c.

rians,

rians, and Eber, i. e. the children of Eber, the Jews; and this was fully accomplished: for as Dion informs us, Assyria, properly so called, was conquered by the Emperor Trojan: and it is well known, that the Romans under Vespasian and Titus, destroyed the second temple, and carried the nation into this long and dreadful captivity: he therefore adds, "And he also shall perish:" that is, Chittim, i. e. the Romans shall be utterly destroyed, because they were the enemies of the Jews, and afflicted them sorely. And this, is only a duplicate of what is mentioned above, when speaking of Edom, "And he shall destroy the remnant out of the city." And which is the fourth beast mentioned in the prophecies of Daniel, as denoting the last of the four great monarchies, as will be fully explained in the course of these Dissertations.

These prophecies, clearly point out the future redemption of Israel, and the destruction of their enemies; for the entire destruction of all their enemies is to take place at the coming of the Messiah. For although they were employed in some measure as God's instruments, to punish the nation; yet, were they

they more intent on gratifying their own insatiable revenge on God's chosen people, than on executing the divine will, as the Prophet Isaiah says, in speaking of the King of Assyria*, "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few." And as the Prophet, denounced a severe punishment to be inflicted upon Assyria, after they should have served the purposes of Divine Providence, saying†, "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the LORD hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." So will God, at the future restoration of the Jews, severely punish all those who have afflicted them in this long and dreadful captivity, as will be clearly evinced by the numerous prophecies cited in the course of the work. And as a proof of this, I shall just mention the prophecy of Jeremiah, which clearly points out two remarkable and wonderful events, viz. the preservation of the Jewish nation, and the total destruction of

* Isai. x. 7.

† Ibid. xii.

their

their enemies. "Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD, for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations, whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in justice, and will not utterly cut thee off." (Jerm. xlvi. 28.) Thus is the preservation of the Jews founded on God's gracious promise; and if we seriously reflect on it, we shall find it really to be one of the most signal and illustrious acts of Divine Providence. And a learned Prelate observes*, the drops of rain which fall, nay, the great rivers which flow into the ocean, are soon mingled and lost in that immense body of waters: and the same in all human probability would have been the fate of the Jews; they would have been mingled, and lost in the common mass of mankind; but on the contrary, we find, that they flow into all parts of the world, mix with all nations, and yet keep separate from all. They still live as a distinct people, and yet they nowhere elect their own magistrates, nor are they governed by their own laws, but by those of the nation where they live. No

* Newton on the Prophecies. Vol. I. p. 124.

people have continued unmixed so long as they have done, not only of those who sent forth colonies into foreign countries, but even of those who abided in their own country. The northern nations (says Dr. Newton*) have come in swarms into the more southern parts of Europe; but where are they now to be discerned and distinguished? The Gauls went forth in great bodies to seek their fortune in foreign parts; but what traces or footsteps of them are now remaining any where? In France, who can separate the race of the antient Gauls, from the various other people, who from time to time have settled there? In Spain, who can distinguish exactly between the first possessors, the Spaniards, and the Goths, and the Moors, who conquered and kept possession of the country for some ages†? In England, who can pretend

* Newton on the Prophecies, page 124.

† In Spain and Portugal, they can scarcely distinguish between the dissembling Jews, and the real Christians, as Basnage observes, (Basnage, Book vii. chap. 21. sect. xxvi. and chap. 33. sect. 14.) for speaking of the Jews after the expulsion of the great body of the nation from thence, he says, "Nevertheless, it is true, that those who remained in *Spain* and *Portugal* dissembled instead of being converted. The number of these dissemblers is very considerable; and it ought

pretend to say with certainty which families are derived from the antient Britons, and which from the Romans, Saxons, Danes, or Normans? The most antient and honourable pedigrees can be traced up only to a certain period, beyond which, there is nothing

ought not to be concluded, that there are no Jews in *Spain* or *Portugal*, because they are not known: they are so much the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, but confounded with the ecclesiasticks, and entering into all ecclesiastical dignities." In another place, speaking of the Jewish nation, he says, "The most surprising thing is, that this religion spreads from generation to generation, and still subsists in the persons of dissemblers in a remote posterity." "In vain," says he, "The great lords of Spain make alliances, (Osorious. libra 1. Mariana. libra. 26. chap. 13.) change their names, and take ancient scutcheons; they are still known to be of a Jewish race, and Jews themselves. The convents of Monks and Nuns, are full of them. Most of the Canons, Inquisitors, and Bishops, proceed from this nation. This," says he, "is enough to make the people and clergy of this country tremble, since such sort of churchmen can only profane the sacraments, and want intention in consecrating the host they adore; in the mean time, OROBIO, who relates the fact, knew these dissemblers. He was one of them himself, and bent the knee before the sacrament. Moreover, he brings proofs of his assertion, in maintaining, that there are in the Synagogue of Amsterdam, brothers and sisters and near relations to good families of Spain and Portugal; and even Franciscan Monks, Dominicans, and Jesuits, who come to do penance for the crime they have committed in dissembling."

but conjecture, and uncertainty, obscurity and ignorance. But the Jews can go up higher than any nation; they can even deduce their pedigree from the beginning of the world. They may not at present, know from what particular tribe or family they are descended, but they know certainly that they all sprang from the stock of Abraham. And yet, the contempt with which they have been treated, and the hardships which they have undergone in almost all countries, should, one would think, have made them desirous to forget or renounce their original: but it is no such thing; they profess it; they glory in it: and, after numberless wars, massacres, and persecutions, they still subsist; they still are very numerous: and what, but a supernatural power could have preserved them in such a manner as no other nation upon earth hath been preserved.

But this, is no more than what Moses foretold them upwards of three thousand years ago, “ And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant
venant

venant with them ; for *I am* the LORD their God," &c. (Levit. xxvi. 44.)

In his Prophetic Poem, he hath also clearly pointed out the mercy of God in the preservation of Israel, and the means taken by Providence to effect it ; for in Deut. xxxii. 26. he says, " I said I would drive them into one corner, (and consequently) I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men." This, hath really been the case of the ten tribes, whom the King of Assyria carried captive to Halah, and Habor, by the river Gozan : and of whom, we have not to this hour, any certain or authentic account, as to their real place of abode. And this, would have been the fate of the rest of the nation, had they been carried to one spot. The Prophet therefore, proceeds thus, " Were it not that the wrath of the enemy would be collected : " The sense of which is, that if they were all in one place, under one prince, and the wrath of the enemy should arise against them, it would be more collected, and consequently, operate with a greater force to effect their destruction. But, God in his infinite mercy, scattered them among all nations ; and thereby prevented

prevented their annihilation: for if one Prince persecutes them, they retire to some of their brethren, who live under the dominion of another who favours them; as history clearly evinces. And, although they are but few, in comparifon to what they were*, owing to the numberless persecutions and massacres which they have suffered in the different kingdoms of Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Poland, England, &c. at various periods; yet, had they all been in one kingdom, they most likely would have been annihilated: but their dispersion among different nations, was the very means of their preservation: for the interest of the various Princes were so opposite to each other, that when one persecuted them, another favoured, and granted them an asylum. Hence it is manifest, that their dispersion among so many nations, throughout the world, is not a sign that God hath cast them off entirely; but, on the contrary, is the strongest apparent proof, that they are under the immedi-

* This fully verifies the words of Moses, in Deut. iv. 27. and xxviii. 62. "And the LORD shall scatter you among the people, and ye shall be left few in number among the nations, whither the LORD shall lead you. And ye shall be left few in number, &c.

ate providence of God, who carefully watches over, and preserves them, amidst the numerous enemies that surround them, till the coming of the true Messiah, when they will be all gathered together, and return to their own land: where they will serve God in truth and sincerity, as written in the law which God commanded his servant Moses.

Of this, a Christian writer* of great note, seems to bear testimony; for he observes, Neither the severe edicts of Kings, nor the hands of the executioner, have been able to destroy them. No, nor the seditious multitude, who have performed massacres and executions, infinitely more tragical than the Princes. Both kings and people, Heathens, Christians, and Mahometans: so opposite in such a number of things, have nevertheless all united in the design of ruining this nation; and still have not been able to effect it. No! The *bush* of Moses, surrounded with flames, hath always burnt without consuming. Notwithstanding that they have suffered misery and persecution from age to age, and have waded through torrents of

* Basnage's History of the Jews.

their

their own blood: yet, they still subsist a distinct nation; whilst nothing remains of the greatest monarchies but the name.

Nor is the providence of God less visible in the destruction of their enemies, than in their preservation: for all those who were their enemies and oppressors, or who removed them from their own land, and carried them into captivity and slavery, were entirely overthrown and destroyed. Let us begin in the order of time: the Egyptians detained them in bondage a number of *years*, and sorely afflicted them; but their punishment was exemplary. The Assyrians first carried the ten tribes of Israel captive, and the Babylonians afterwards the two remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The Syro-Macedonians, especially Antiochus Epiphanes, cruelly persecuted them: and the Romans utterly dissolved the Jewish state, and dispersed the people, so that they have never been able to recover their country again. But where are these great and famous monarchies now, who in their turns subdued and cruelly oppressed the people of God? Are they not vanished as a dream? Of the two former, the name is known only to the learned; and
of

of the latter, nothing exists but their fame. But the Jews still subsist as a distinct people to this day. And is not this a most singular wonder of Providence, that the vanquished, should for so many ages survive the victors; and the former be spread over all the world, while the latter are no more.

I have already observed, that the last prophecy of Balaam, clearly points out the restoration of the Jews, and the destruction of their enemies, at the coming of the Messiah; but nothing of this kind took place at the coming of Jesus. For at that time, no star came forth from Jacob, nor did a sceptre rise out of Israel, which smote the corners of Moab, and broke down the walls of all the children of Sheth; i. e. that brought the whole world into subjection, as above shewn. Neither did Edom at that time become the possession of Israel: for although the Edomites or Idumeans were reduced by Hyrcanus to the necessity of becoming proselytes to the Jewish religion*, yet, did they not possess the land of Edom: for the Idumea or land of Edom in which those people

* Joseph. lib. xiii. chap. 17. And lib. xv. chap. 11.

Strabo lib. xvi. page 760.

then dwelt, was not the Idumea or land of Edom mentioned in the Old Testament; for that lay between the lake of Sodom and the Red sea: but the Edomites being driven thence by the Nabathaens, while the Jews were in the Babylonish captivity, and their land lay desolate, they took possession of as much of the southern part of it, as contained what had formerly been the whole inheritance of the tribe of Simeon, and also, half of that which had been the inheritance of the tribe of Judah: and there they dwelt at the time that Hyrcanus reduced them to the necessity, of either embracing the Jewish religion*, or forsaking the country, and seeking new dwellings elsewhere; when they embraced the former. So that it is clear, that their country did not become a possession for Israel. Neither did any come out of Jacob who had dominion, and destroyed the remnant out of the city: nor are the Romans, whom he speaks of by the name of Chittim, entirely destroyed, as mentioned by the Prophet, "and he shall perish for ever." For although the *Roman*

* Joseph. lib. xiii. chap. 17. and lib. xv. chap. 11.
Strabo. lib. xvi. page 760.

Empire was broken by the invasions of the Northern nations, yet is the nation not finally destroyed; as the Prophet foretold: but which will undoubtedly take place at the coming of the Messiah, when all the enemies of the Jews will receive their due reward: for as the former parts of these prophecies were completely fulfilled, no doubt can be entertained of the completion of the latter parts, in their due time. But, as nothing of this took place, at the coming of Jesus, it is manifest, he could not be the Messiah, foretold by the Prophet. For he neither redeemed the Jews, nor punished their enemies.

DISSERTATION II.

The Prophecies of Moses.

THE second that prophesied concerning the future restoration and happiness of the Jewish nation, was our legislator Moses; from whose writings I shall select two prophecies, which plainly foretell the future restoration of the Jews, and the destruction of their enemies.

The first, is Deut. xxx. 1. &c. "And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart, among all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart and with all thy soul : That *then* the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and compassionate thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If *any* of thine be driven out unto the uttermost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee."

In the twenty-eighth chapter of Deut. we find, that Moses set before them, the blessings and the curses. In chap. xxix. he caused them to enter into the covenant, and fully informed them of the dreadful consequence of their breach of it. Having thus clearly shewn them the consequence of their obedience or disobedience, and drawn a lively picture of their miserable state in case of the latter

latter, he proceeds to inform them of their future Redemption, which is to take place after all their sufferings; for the Prophet having a prescience of their disobedience, and of course, the evil which would befall them; he, in order to prevent their despair in the greatness of their affliction, assures them of the certainty of their future Redemption, and the destruction of their enemies, in this chapter.

For he assures them, as of a certainty, that when all these afflictions shall come upon them, and they should return unto their God, and obey his voice, that then, their redemption will follow of course.

That the reader may be able, fully to comprehend the force and meaning of the Prophecy, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language; it will be necessary to take notice of the terms used by the Prophet, both in regard to the nation's repentance, and the return of God's favour. For on the people's part, he mentions their return to God, by observing, first, *חשבת אל לבבך* And thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart: i. e. shalt fully consider in thy heart the state of thy case secretly, and repent. And in the next verse

verse he says, ושב ע' ה' אלהיך And thou shalt return unto the LORD thy God. On the part of the Supreme Being, he says, ושב ה' אלהיך את שביתך ורחמך ושב וקבצך And the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and compassionate thee, and will return and gather thee, &c. So that he makes use of a duplicate expression, as well on God's part as on the people's. We also find that in verse 8th, and 10th, he again mentions the return of the people to God, so that the people's return to God is mentioned four times, and God's return to the people twice. But the reason of this is, that Moses, by divine inspiration, had a prescience of all that was to happen to us, in this long and dreadful captivity; and foresaw that there would be two different parties in the Jewish nation.

The one, consisting of such who through the length of the captivity, numberless massacres, persecutions, and banishments, would not have sufficient fortitude to support them, and would therefore seem to apostatize, and pretend to embrace Christianity*, but in their hearts secretly adhere to the true faith,

* Vide Bafnage. Hist. of the Jews. Book vii. chap. 21. sect. xx. &c. &c.

and

and law of Moses; and such are at this day called among us אנוסים *The compelled ones*: because, they act by compulsion: for as soon as they can by any means escape from the Popish countries, they instantly return to Judaism, as mentioned page 18. note 2.

The other, consists of those, who notwithstanding all their sufferings, have constantly adhered to the truth; made open profession of their faith; and being at all times known by the surname of Israel: of whom there are but few left, in comparison of the numbers which formerly existed.

Now, Moses by turns, addressed himself to each of these parties: for when he said וְהֵשַׁבְתָּ אֶל לִבְךָ And thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart: (or, according to the idiom of the English language, And thou shalt reflect inwardly) he addressed those who acted by compulsion; for although they had sinned, yet were they still a part of Israel. And, because their faith was secret, and their good works done in private, for fear of those among whom they dissembled: the prophet makes use of the expression, “And thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart AMONG all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven

driven thee." That is, because thou art thus intermixed among the nations, and art called by their name; and therefore canst not call on God publickly: that thou shalt invoke him secretly in thy heart.

As to the other party, who publickly and constantly adhere to the true faith, he observed, "And thou *shalt* return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children," &c. For these, make open profession of their faith, and publickly read the word of God in their known places of worship; they and their *children*: for their children are not forced from them, as are those of the other party*. They therefore, may return unto God by a sincere repentance in a public manner. And the Prophet assures them, that when both parties have sincerely repented; the one publickly, and the other privately; that then, God would return unto both of them: for which reason, he made use of different expressions. For to those who always continued in the covenant, he observed, "That then the LORD thy God will turn thy capti-

* Vide Basnage, chap. xxxiv. page 749, &c.

vity, and compassionate thee." Because they are actually in captivity, and bear all the miseries thereof: he therefore justly observes, that God will have compassion on them to preserve them, in the midst of all the cruel persecutions which they suffer for the sake of their faith. But to the other party, he only says, "And he will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee." But makes not the least mention of their captivity, &c. For they cannot properly be said to be in captivity; because they are considered as Christians, and consequently enjoy the same privileges; are possessed of great estates and rank, and make alliances with the noble families of the countries where they live; for which reason, he only said that, God would return and gather them from among the nations where they had intermarried, &c.

In the following verse, he addresses himself to both parties at once, saying, "If any of thine be driven unto the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee."

In verse 5th, He informs them of the full

possession of the land, " And the LORD thy God will bring thee unto the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it: and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." And to encourage and assure them, that they need not be afraid of being deprived of all those blessings, by relapsing into their former sins, as the imagination of man's heart *is inclined to evil* from his youth, and they might then be again carried away captive, he informs them, verse 6th. " And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." That is, that the LORD will incline their hearts constantly to love the LORD their God with all their heart and with all their soul, that they may live upon the land continually; and not go into captivity any more.

But this great change, which Moses calls the circumcision of the heart, and which denotes their refraining from sin, is not to be brought about by God's depriving man of his free will: for free agency, is one of the constituent properties of an intellectual Being: But this great change in their temper, will be wrought by the great and numberless
signs

signs and wonders, which God will perform in those days, as the Prophet says*, “ And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth; blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke,” &c. As also their great deliverance from captivity, after so many hundred years; the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgement, when the punishment of their enemies will take place, as foretold by this prophet; as will be shewn at large, when we come to treat of this prophecy. By these great and surprising miracles, they will be so struck with amazement at the wonderful works of Providence, that their uncircumcised heart will be humbled; and they will no more crave for the gratification of their sensual appetites; but all their desire, will be the enjoyment of spiritual blessings; so that they will be in the same state of innocence, as Adam before his fall. Agreeable to what the Prophet says†, “ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, &c. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the

* Joel iii. 3.

† Jerem. xxxi. 31, &c.

LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD." For the effect of the stupendous miracles above-mentioned, will make such a strong, forcible, and lasting impression on their minds, that it may be said to be engraven in indelible characters in their hearts; and by its powerful influence direct them to good, and prevent their inclination to sin: this, is properly the *circumcision of the heart*, as it will entirely annihilate the evil imagination of man. And this is what the Prophet Ezekiel* meant when he said, "I will also give you a new heart," &c. as will be explained, when we come to treat of that prophecy.

And, because the different nations amongst whom they were scattered, persecuted them most cruelly: Moses therefore, after mentioning their redemption, observes, verse 7th. "And the LORD thy God will put all these

* Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

curse upon thine enemies, and them that hate thee, and have persecuted thee." Which clearly points out God's vengeance on those who have persecuted them.

In verse 8th, he again addresses himself to those who dissemble, and act by compulsion, who repent secretly in their hearts, but are not able to keep the commandments for fear of persecution; observing, "And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day." That is, these dissemblers must not only return to God, but must be particularly careful to *perform* all the commandments of God after their restoration, and not to act as they have hitherto done through necessity, as that cause will then be finally removed.

In verse 9th, he informs them, that although they must forsake the paths they have hitherto trod among the Gentiles, by separating themselves from them, and returning to the body of the nation, yet, they should not be deprived of the temporal good which they had formerly enjoyed among them, but should enjoy it in a much more ample manner: as he observes, "And the LORD thy God

God will make thee excel in all the work of thine hands, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land for good." By which, they are assured of the enjoyment of every temporal good. He then assures them of enjoying the spiritual good as aforetime, saying, "For the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers." That is, by the restoration of the SHECHINAH or divine presence, the ark, and cherubim, the spirit of prophecy, fire from heaven, &c. the same as their fathers enjoyed in the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and in the Temple which Solomon built.

And in verse 10th, he informs them, why God will confer on them the enjoyment of all this good, both spiritual and temporal; because the LORD knows that they will not be unthankful, and abuse the good bestowed upon them, as they did heretofore; as the Prophet says*, "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked," &c. But on the contrary, assures them, that they will obey the voice of the LORD: as he says, "For thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God

* Deut. xxxii. 15.

to keep his commandments, and his statutes *which are* written in the book of this law, because thou wilt turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul." And therefore, they will continue stedfast in their righteous state, and will not return to sin any more.

This, appears to me to be the real sense of the prophecy, and clearly accounts for the different expressions made use of by the Prophet, both in regard to the people's repentance, and the return of God's kindness towards them: whence, the following seven important truths, of the facts to be accomplished at the restoration of the Jewish nation, are evidently deducible.

First. That God himself will turn our captivity, (as was the case in Egypt) as mentioned in verse 3d. "That *then* the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity." But this, was not the case on the return from Babylon, when the Jews returned by the licence and order of Cyrus; in consequence of which, we know what trouble and vexation they encountered, and how the building was hindered, &c. But as our future restoration will be by God himself, in the person

person of the Messiah, as in Egypt, by Moses, when God himself slew all the first born; we shall in consequence, on our return to our own land, enjoy one entire, continual, and uninterrupted state of prosperity.

Second. The future restoration will be general to all the tribes of Israel, scattered in the four corners of the earth; as mentioned verse 4th. "If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee." This, did not take place at their return from the Babylonish captivity; for the ten tribes which the king of Assyria carried away, did not return; neither did the children of Israel and Judah, who were in Egypt, and the land of Ammon and Moab, in Gaul and Spain, and divers other parts return: but only some from Babylon; and those but a small part, and of the lower orders of the people.

Third. The future restoration will include ALL THE POSTERITY of Jacob: even those who have apostatized, and dissembled, as above shewn, from the different expressions

sions made use of by Moses, as addressing himself to the two different parties. This is also clearly pointed out by the expression of the Prophet Isaiah, (lix. 20.) "And the Redeemer shall come unto Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, saith the LORD." By "those who turn from transgression," the Prophet means those who have transgressed the law by dissembling and apostatizing; who will then repent, and be ashamed of such conduct. But nothing of this, took place at their return from the Babylonish captivity; and much less at the coming of Jesus.

Fourth. At the future restoration, the Jewish nation will enjoy a more splendid and exalted state, than they did during the continuance of the first temple, even under David and Solomon; as mentioned in verse 5th. "And he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." But the very reverse of this, took place at their return from Babylon, as they remained in almost continual subjection, either to the Persians and Medes, the Grecians or the Romans, by whom they were at last entirely driven out of their country, which they have never been able to recover to this day.

Fifth. That God will restore his *Shechinah*, or Divine presence to the Temple, the gift of Prophecy, and the other holy things which were in the first temple, as mentioned verse 9th. "For the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers." This, it is manifest, denotes spiritual joy, by the residence of his Divine presence among them; agreeable to what the Prophet Zechariah says*, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, behold, I will come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee." But this, and much more, was wanting in the second temple: for those extraordinary marks of the Divine favour, with which the first temple was honoured, and which were its chief glory, were wholly wanting in the second; for there was no Ark of the covenant, and mercy seat, upon it; no *Shechinah*, or Divine presence; no Urim and Thummim; no holy fire upon the altar: and no spirit of prophecy: all which, are to be restored at the coming of the Messiah.

Sixth. After the future redemption, they will never go into captivity again, because

* Zech. ii, 14.

they

they will continue stedfast in their duty to God, as mentioned verse 6th. “And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart,” &c. as above explained: neither of which, was accomplished during the continuance of the second temple, or at the coming of Jesus: but on the contrary, they were split into factions, committing robberies and murders on each other with impunity; to which we may add, the heresies of the Sadduces, and other hereticks: so that their wickedness being thus enormous, God removed them entirely from off their own land.

Seventh. At the time of the future redemption, all our enemies, and those who persecuted us, will be punished in a most exemplary manner, as mentioned verse 7th. “And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.” But this, was not effected at their return from Babylon, nor during the time of the second temple, as they were generally in subjection to their enemies; and were sorely afflicted at times, with the sword, famine, and pestilence, till they were entirely rooted out from the land; whilst their enemies grew

powerful; especially, at the coming of Jesus, when they were under the power of a Roman governor: from all which, it is manifest, that this prophecy was not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor at the coming of Jesus, but remains to be fulfilled at the coming of the true Messiah, whose mission will be, to restore the lost sheep of Israel, punish their enemies, and bring universal love and peace to mankind, as will be clearly shewn in the sequel.

The second Prophecy, is contained in the latter part of his prophetic Poem. Dent. xxxii. 34. I have elsewhere* already observed, that this Poem contains six parts. The first part consists of the first five verses, and is a prefatory introduction to the Poem: The second part contains nine verses: the subject of which is, the kindness and beneficence of the Supreme Being towards Israel: The third part consists of the next four verses, in which he describes the sin and wickedness of the nation: The fourth part consists of the next seven verses, in which he recounts the afflictions with which GOD

* Vide Preface to *Lingua Sacra*, page 2.

would

would punish them for their disobedience : The fifth part contains the next eight verses, wherein he describes the final destruction, which the Supreme Being might have been induced to have brought upon them for their enormous crimes, had it not been for one particular reason, and which he inimitably describes : The sixth and last part (which is what we mean to treat of) contains the last ten verses of the Poem, in which he rehearses the consolation of Israel, and the vengeance which GOD will take on their enemies.

In the immediately preceding part, he speaks of the wickedness and abominations of the different nations of the earth, who have persecuted God's chosen people : he therefore cautions his readers, not to imagine, that because these nations were in a state of the greatest prosperity, they had not been guilty of any crime in persecuting God's chosen people ; had not committed any abominations : or that their crimes were forgotten by the Supreme Being ; on the contrary, he says, verse 34th, " Is not THIS laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures ? " By the pronoun THIS, he alludes

alludes to the preceding verse, "Their wine is as the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps." By this figurative expression, he clearly points out those dreadful and cruel persecutions of the nations against the Jews; and therefore declares, that that very poisoned wine, and that bitter cup, which they caused the children of Israel to drink during the captivity, was laid up in store with the Supreme Being, and sealed up in his treasures, in order to cause them to drink it, as a just retaliation for their crimes: agreeable to what the Prophet Obadiah says*, "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy dealing shall return upon thine own head†." Again, "They shall drink and shall swallow down; and they shall be as though they had not been." And thus also says the Prophet Jeremiah‡, "The cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked."

He therefore proceeds§, "To me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompence, at the time that their foot shall slip." That is, at the

* Obad. i. 15.

† Ibid. i. 16.

‡ Lament. iv. 21.

§ Verse 35.

time when the measure of their iniquity shall be full, and the period of their power is arrived; agreeable to what the Prophet Daniel says*, “ Their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.” He then observes, “ For the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste: When the LORD shall have judged his people, and repent himself concerning his servants.” Here, Moses clearly points out the time of the commencement of their calamity, and also the reason why it is to be inflicted upon them; i. e. when the LORD shall have judged his people, and repented concerning the suffering of his servants: when they shall have received the full measure of punishment for their crimes. For although the Gentiles have, according to their evil doings, and their corrupt religious tenets, long deserved exemplary punishment, yet, is God pleased to defer his wrath, so long as the Jews remain unworthy of being redeemed, and have not repented; or received the full measure of their punishment. And thus says the Psalmist†, “ For the LORD will judge his people, and repent him-

* Daniel vii. 12.

† Psalm cxxxv. 14.

self concerning his servants. *Then will it be seen that the idols of the nations, are but silver and gold, the work of men's hands, &c. &c. They who make them shall be like them,*" &c.

Moses then proceeds to inform us, when God will repent himself concerning his servants. First. "When he shall see that their power is gone, and there is none *that hath* a ruling power, or *strength* to uphold: i. e. after they have continued so long in captivity, as almost to despair of being restored; because their power is sunk to so low an ebb, as scarce to afford any hopes of their being reinstated.

Second. On account of the profanation of God's name among the nations, as expressed in verses 37th and 38th. "And he (the enemy) shall say, Where *is* their God, *their* rock in whom they trusted, who did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection*." Here we may perceive, the pencil of a masterly hand, delineating the exact expressions which Christians make use of towards us, at this

* Heb. An hiding for you.

present time: for in the first place, they observe, that because we rejected and persecuted the lord of life, therefore hath God rejected, and cast us off, and made choice of the Gentiles, who they say, are now the chosen Israel: and which Moses has so forcibly expressed, by the enemy's saying, Where *is* their God, the rock in whom they trusted? For they actually declare that we are without a God, because we deny the doctrine of the trinity*, and the merits of the blood and sufferings of Christ, as the Messiah and Saviour of the world. That this is no chimaera, I need only refer the reader to page 100, of a work called, "Romaine's Practical Commentary," where he will find the following charge exhibited against the Jews†. "They (the Jews) are now without a God, because they have rejected the true God, the blessed Trinity of their fathers, and worship they know not what. They have set up some strange kind of an infinitely extended metaphysical Being, whom they call the one supreme God, and

* And which, I suppose, they found on a John ix.

† Vide Levi's Letters to Dr. Priestley, Part I. page 74, of the First Edit. and page 78, of the Second Edit.

“ who never had any existence, but what
“ the enemies of Christianity have been
“ pleased to give him.”

Secondly. That all the sacrifices which we had offered in the temple, &c. were of none effect, not being able to make atonement for sin; but were only typical of the great sacrifice of Jesus the lord of life. This, he has emphatically described, by their saying, in a contemptuous manner, “ Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, *and* drank the wine of their drink offerings :” for it was the fat of the sacrifice only which was offered, and the wine poured out for a libation : he therefore, makes use of this expression, as if they were to say to us tauntingly, Of what efficacy could all your offerings of Bulls and Rams be? Do you imagine that God wants to eat the fat of your sacrifices, or drink the wine of your libations? No: it was nothing more than typical of the great sacrifice of the lord of life, who was to suffer for the universal redemption of mankind. And, is not this the language with which we are really upbraided by the Christians at this day? This, I think, no one can deny; for all their writings

ings teem with this, from the fixpenny Pamphlet, to the huge folio.

I cannot proceed without observing that, we have here a most remarkable, and wonderful instance of the truth and verity of Prophecy, and Divine Revelation: for can any thing be more clear and perspicuously described, than those two facts are in this prophecy by Moses? Indeed, they are so plain, that it would be no wonder, if deists and infidels were to have recourse to the stale and hackneyed argument, that the facts were prior to the predictions, and the prophecies written after the histories. But the great number of years that have elapsed since the delivery of this prophecy, and its accomplishment at this present time, entirely destroys the force of this sophistry; confirms the matter beyond all doubt, and fully establishes the truth of prophecy; for need there be a greater demonstration of the truth of Revelation, than that a prediction delivered upwards of three thousand years ago, should be thus clearly fulfilling at this very day.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because it appears to me to be an argument

of the greatest importance in proof of Divine Revelation: for it almost surpasses belief, to imagine it possible, that such a thing should ever come to pass: viz. That the Jews should be upbraided at this day with having no God, because, they worship the ONE supreme God: because, they worship the God of their fathers: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: the God of Moses, to whom he declared himself by the name I AM: the God described in the Law and the prophets, AS THE ONLY LIVING AND TRUE GOD: that pure UNITY so strongly inculcated in the Mosaical dispensation, &c. And for which, they have suffered such dreadful persecutions and massacres: for which, such torrents of their blood hath flowed: and yet, we see with what exactness it hath been fulfilled. If after such demonstration of the truth of prophecy, the deist can still persist in denying the truth of Divine Revelation, I really pity him, as past all recovery: for I can impute it nothing else, but mere obstinacy, and the dread of incurring the shame of acknowledging himself in error, that prevents him from embracing the truth: although, there cannot
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be a more praiseworthy act, than an open and manly acknowledgement of one's errors.

In verse 39th, He, by a most beautiful figure shews, that, when the nations shall thus have profaned the name of the LORD of hosts, that God will be jealous for his name's sake; and when he comes to punish them for their blasphemy, will say, "See now that I, *even I am* he, and *there is* no God with me." I am he unto whom the children of Israel offered their sacrifices, and I am the same now; for I *am* the LORD, I change not*; neither is there any god with me: no plurality of persons, as ye said: no Elohim†: no trinity in Unity: but a perfect, pure UNITY.

He then proceeds, "I kill, and I will make alive: I have wounded, and I will heal; neither *is there any* that can deliver

* Malach. iii. 6.

† It is really worthy of remark, that Moses does not make use of the noun אֱל, as in verse 12th; but אֱלֹהִים, which the Christians say, denotes a plurality of persons in the God-head, or a trinity in unity: he therefore, in order to explode that corrupt and pernicious doctrine, makes use of the noun אֱלֹהִים, as if he had said, that plurality which ye attributed to the noun Elohim, hath no existence with me, for I am a pure UNITY.

out

out of my hand." I have killed Israel in the captivity; I have doomed them to death, not you by your power: and I will make them alive at the resurrection: I have wounded them with sore afflictions during the captivity, and I will heal them by their redemption: agreeable to what the Prophet Isaiah says, (chap. xxx. 26.) "In the day when the LORD shall bind up the breach of his people; and shall heal the wound, which his stroke hath afflicted." But, remember, that as I have severely punished them for their sins, so will I punish you for your crimes; for there is none that can deliver you out of my hand.

In this sentence, Moses informs us of three most important, and wonderful events, which are to take place at the coming of the Messiah: viz. the resurrection of the dead, the restoration of the Jews, and the punishment of their enemies: for the first is expressed, by his saying, "I kill, and I will make alive." The second, by the expression, "I have wounded, and I will heal:" for the captivity is called the *wound* of Israel, as already mentioned. The third, by the

the expression, "*Neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.*"

And it really is very remarkable, that the Prophet Ezekiel, hath also thus arranged them: for in chap. xxxvii. from verse 1st, to verse 14th, he speaks of the resurrection of the dead: and in verse 15th, &c. he speaks of the future restoration of Israel, when they are all to be united into one kingdom, under one prince. After which, in chap. xxxviii. he speaks of the vengeance which God will take of their enemies. This, I think, is a strong corroboration of the explanation which I have given.

Moses then proceeds, (verse 40.) "*For I lift up hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.*" This is to be considered as the conclusion of the preceding sentence, and the beginning of the succeeding one: and ought to be thus explained. As sure as I lift up my hand to heaven, and swear that I live for ever, so sure is there none that can deliver out of my hand. And, as sure as I live for ever, "*When I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgement; will I render vengeance to mine enemies, and will requite them that hate me.*" Thus, is the
certainty

certainty of the punishment of our enemies predicted to be as indubitable, as the eternal existence of the Supreme Being.

He then proceeds to inform us, that, the punishment of the nations will not be by a long captivity, as was that of the Jews, but by sudden slaughter and destruction : as he says, verse 42d. " I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh." He also shews the cause of their deserving this severe punishment, as mentioned in the latter part of the said verse, "*And that* for the blood of the slain, and the captives, from the beginning of the revenges of the enemy." From the time that the enemy first began to slay the captives of Israel, and to persecute them with the keenest revenge.

In verse 43d, he concludes the Poem, saying, " Cause his people to rejoice, O ye nations : for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries." For as the nations have hitherto been the sole cause of all their trouble and sorrow, by cruelly persecuting them ; he informs us, that at the coming of the Messiah, the case will be reversed ; for then
the

the nations will be the cause of joy, and triumph to God's chosen people, when they see how he will revenge the blood of his servants, who have been most cruelly put to death during this long captivity. And thus says the Psalmist*, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." He also informs us of another cause of their joy, "And he will be reconciled to his land and to his people." He will pardon his people, and cleanse his land of all the many abominations, with which it hath been polluted, by the nations who possessed it at different times, during their captivity.

The explanation here given, of this part of the Prophetic Poem of Moses, I humbly conceive, to be the real sense of the Prophecy: The sixth, and last part of the Poem, according to the division above mentioned, being the only one that remains to be fulfilled, the others having been all accomplished, as will be shewn presently: whence, the seven following fundamental truths are evidently deducible. First. That at the future restoration, (which I call the true Redemption,) God will avenge us of all those

JOH. 18. 11. Psalm lviii. 11.

nations, who have destroyed and persecuted us, as mentioned verse 35th, 41st, 42d, and 43d. "To me belongeth vengeance and recompence. I will render vengeance to mine enemies, &c. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, &c. For he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries." But this, did not take place at their return from Babylon, nor at the coming of Jesus, nor at any other time since.

Second. That the punishment of the nations, and the Redemption of Israel, hath a certain and determinate period, which God hath never imparted to any prophet whatever, as mentioned verse 34th, and 35th. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? At the time when their foot shall slide," &c. And thus was it said to the Prophet Daniel*, "For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." But, this was not the case, at their return from Babylon, for all the people publicly knew that they were to be visited at the end of seventy years, according to what the Prophet Jeremiah said †; nei-

* Daniel xii. 9. † Jerem. xxix. 10.

ther was any punishment inflicted upon their enemies, when that visitation took place: on the contrary, their return was by leave of Cyrus king of Persia, by whose decrees, and those of the other kings of Persia, the Temple, &c. was rebuilt; of course, this Prophecy could not be said to be fulfilled, at their return from Babylon.

Third. That the true Redemption will take place, after the Nation hath received the full measure of its punishment, as mentioned verse 36th. "For the LORD shall judge his people, &c. when he shall see their power is gone," &c. When they in justice will deserve to be redeemed, agreeable to what the Prophet Isaiah says, chap. i. verse 27th. "Sion shall be redeemed in judgment." After he had in verse 25th, foretold her severe chastisement, "And I will bring again mine hand over thee: and I will clearly purge away thy dross: and I will remove all thine alloy.*" But this, was not accomplished at their return from Babylon: on the contrary, their sins were not yet done away: and they greatly added to them, so that they were doomed to a future captivi-

* Thy tin: a figurative expression.

ty, as the Angel observed to Daniel *, “To finish (or more properly, to consume) transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make expiation for iniquity,” as I have explained at large in my first Letters to Dr. Priestley, page 34th†, and sequel; and page 79th of my second Letters, in answer to his Letters, Part II. To this we may also add, that at the time of their return from Babylon, they were not reduced to so low an estate, but on the contrary, were possessed of riches and honour, in as much, that it was only the meaner sort that returned, the opulent refusing to return, as was the case with those who were in Spain, and Gaul, &c. as already mentioned page 40.

Fourth. That our deliverance from the present captivity, will not be in consequence of our merit, or that of our ancestors, but merely, for the sake of His holy name, which hath been profaned among the nations, as mentioned, verse 37th. “And he (the enemy) shall say, where is their god, their rock, in whom they trusted,” &c. And this agrees with what the Prophet Ezekiel says,

* Dan. ix. 24.

† And page 38th, of Second Edition. A third has just been published.

Chap. xx. verse 34th, and 41st. "And I will gather you out of the countries whither ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out," &c. "And I will gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered, and I will be sanctified because of you in the sight of the nations." And in chap. xxxvi, verse 22d, he says, "Thus saith the LORD God: Not for your sakes do I this, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name, which ye have profaned* among the nations, whither ye are gone. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the LORD God, when I shall be sanctified in you in their sight." Hence it is manifest, that our redemption will take place in consequence of God being jealous for his holy name, which hath been profaned among the nations, as our Legislator Moses, and the Prophet Ezekiel, have prophesied, and not for any merit of

* Not that they themselves profaned the name of the LORD, but were the cause of it, as mentioned verse 20th, and 23d.

ours, as will be shewn at large in the sequel, when we come to treat of the prophecies of Ezekiel.

Fifth. That the Redemption and reconciliation which Moses hath assured us of in this Prophetic Poem, is not conditional, to take place only in consequence of our Repentance, and hearkening to the voice of the LORD, by obeying his commandments; on the contrary, this song is nothing more than a written evidence, that we should, in process of time, be exceedingly wicked, forsaking the LORD's commandments, and committing all manner of crimes, for which, God would punish us severely, by a long and dreadful captivity, scattering us in all corners, &c. yet, would not suffer us to be annihilated, so that our name should perish from off the earth: but that, after we had thus been severely punished, the Supreme Being, for the sake of his holy name, which hath been profaned among the nations, as already mentioned, would turn from his fierce anger, and repent him of the evil; punish our enemies with his great, well-tempered, strong sword; pardon our sins; have compassion on us, cover our iniquities,

and

and redeem us ; for which reason, he called, as it were, heaven and earth to witness the truth of what he predicted ; as well in regard of our sins, and exemplary punishment, as our future Redemption. So that, according to the tenour of this prophecy, it is clear that, although we should not repent, yet, is our Redemption to take place at the APPOINTED TIME : for notwithstanding that we might, by a thorough and sincere repentance of the whole nation, be the means of working our reconciliation and Redemption, as mentioned page 29, 32 ; yet the Prophet does not consider, or mention it, in this Poem, as the condition of our future Redemption : but absolutely declares, without any restriction, that, after we have received the due reward of our sins, God would punish our enemies, and be reconciled to his land, and to his people : so that, properly speaking, this Prophetic Poem, must be considered as an historical anticipation, of all that was to happen to the nation from their first Redemption from Egypt, to their latter Redemption by the Messiah.

This also fully confirms the opinion held by our Rabbins, that there are two periods
for

for our Redemption, viz: First, on the condition of our repentance, as mentioned in the first prophecy of Moses. Secondly, after we have received the full measure of affliction for all our iniquities, in this long, and every way dreadful captivity.

But, as nothing of what is above mentioned, took place during, or at their return from the Babylonish captivity, it is manifest, that, it could not be the redemption spoken of by Moses in this Poem, which still remains to be fulfilled at the coming of the true Messiah.

Sixth. That the Resurrection of the dead will be very near the time of the Redemption, as mentioned verse 39th. "I kill, and I will make alive; I have wounded, and I will heal," as already explained. And thus said the Angel to Daniel*, "And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one *that shall be found written in the book.*" "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," &c. And the Prophet Isaiah has also spoken largely of this subject, as will he fully explained, when we come to treat of his Prophecies. Hence, it is clear

* Dan. xii. 1, 2.

that,

that, all the Prophets agree, with one accord, in prophesying that the resurrection of the dead, is an event that will take place near the time of the restoration of the nation.

Seventh. That the first five parts of this Prophetic Poem, have been fully accomplished, viz. The kindness and beneficence of the Supreme Being towards Israel, in giving them possession of the holy land, and their prosperity under David and Solomon : their sins of idolatry, &c. their captivity, and the severe punishments that followed, and their preservation as a distinct nation to this very day, notwithstanding all their sufferings, and which undoubtedly, is one of the most wonderful things in the world, as already observed, page 17 : whence, I presume to think, that the completion of the first five parts, may be considered, as a pledge and earnest of the accomplishment of the sixth, which mentions the Redemption of the Nation, &c. And it is very remarkable, that the Prophet Jeremiah, hath clearly evinced the truth of this position, in the following words*, which he produces as an argument,

* Jerem xxxii. 42.

in support of what he had delivered as a prophecy foretelling the future restoration of the nation : “ For thus saith the LORD, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.” A stronger proof than what is contained in these words of the Prophet, in support of the spirit of prophecy, cannot be required ; for the accomplishment of the evils predicted, is a sure pledge of the completion of the good promised : and therefore, as it is allowed on all hands, that the first five parts of this Poem, hath been fulfilled in every particular fact, it consequently is manifest, that not the least doubt ought to be entertained of the full accomplishment of the last part.

DISSERTATION III.

The Prophecies of Isaiah.

THE third, who prophesied of the Redemption, and future restoration of the Jews, was Isaiah, the son of Amos, and who unquestionably delivered a greater number
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of Prophecies concerning the future restoration of the nation, than any other Prophet, as will be shewn in the sequel. Of these, I mean to take notice of such only, as are clear, forcible, and unequivocal, in pointing out the character and coming of the Messiah; the restoration of the Jews; the punishment of their enemies, and the resurrection of the dead: these three great events are to take place in succession after each other, as already shewn from the words of Moses, and the arrangement of them by Ezekiel.

The first prophecy of Isaiah concerning the future restoration of the Jews, is contained in the second, third, and fourth verses of the second chapter of his book. Before I proceed to the explanation of this prophecy, it is necessary to premise, That the Prophet Micah, (chap. iv. 1, 4.) has delivered this same prophecy concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, with scarcely any material variation; save, that he has embellished it, by the addition of a sentence, "And they shall sit, every man under his vine," &c. and which fully evinces that, this prophecy fore-

tells the kingdom of the Messiah, as will clearly appear from the explanation.

For as the Prophet makes use of the expression, *in the latter days*, it is clear, that he thereby meant the days of the Messiah; and thus say Abarbanal and Kimchi, "Wherever the latter times are mentioned in Scripture, the days of the Messiah are always meant." See also Nachmonides on Genesis xlix. 1. And Bishop Lowth, in his notes on the second chapter of Isaiah, after having cited Kimchi's opinion on these words, viz. that the latter days, denotes the days of the Messiah, adds, "And, in regard to this place, nothing can be more clear and certain." And Dr. Newcombe, Bishop of Waterford, in his notes on Micah, iv. 1. observes, "These four verses contain a prophecy which was to be fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah." So far he is right; but when he adds, that "Then the Gentiles were to be admitted into a covenant with God, and the apostles were to preach the gospel, beginning at Jerusalem: Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 14. &c. When Christ was to be the spiritual Judge, and king of many people,

was

was to convince many nations of their errors and vices, and was to found a religion which had the strongest tendency to promote peace." It is plain that, he errs, and has totally mistaken the true sense of the prophecy, and so hath Bishop Lowth, and all the Christian writers who have espoused that opinion: for no such universal peace, as is here foretold by the Prophets, hath ever taken place yet; neither has the mountain of the temple of the LORD been established on the top of the mountains, &c. as will be shewn presently. For in this prophecy, the Prophet has assured us of five things, or events, that are to take place, and be accomplished in the latter days, i. e. at the coming of the Messiah.

First. "That the temple shall be rebuilt, and continue, so as not to be destroyed any more;" as he says, verse 2d. "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established on the top of the mountains." By the word *established*, it is plain, that he meant, it was to be fixed unalterably. Of course, it was not to be destroyed any more.

Second.

Second. That it should "be exalted above the hills:" but this exaltation will not be merely an exaltation of place, or consist in the greatness of the building; but in its holiness and sanctity, as mentioned, "And all nations shall flow unto it." For this is not to be effected by individuals only, but by whole nations, as the Prophet says, "And many people* shall go, and shall say: Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD: to the house of the God of Jacob."

Third. That all nations will then acknowledge the true Unity of God, and freely confess, that the LORD alone is God, and that their fathers had inherited† lies, and vanity, and things, wherein there is no profit. They therefore, will all be desirous of being instructed in the true Law of God, as the Prophet says, "And he will teach us of his ways: and we will walk in his paths." That is, we all will serve him with one accord; agreeable to what the Prophet Zephaniah says, (iii. 9.) "For then will I turn the (hearts of the) people‡ to a pure language§, that they may all call upon the name

* Heb. Peoples.

† Jerem. xvi. 19.

‡ Heb. Peoples.

§ Heb. Lip.

of the LORD, to serve him with one consent." And thus also says the Prophet Zechariah, (xiv. 9.) "And the LORD shall be King over all the earth: in that day the LORD alone shall be *acknowledged*, and his name *shall also be one*." And therefore they will all come up to the mountain of the LORD, in order to be taught, as mentioned presently after, "For from Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

Fourth. That the Messiah, who is to teach the nations the word of the LORD, which is to go forth from Zion, will judge and plead with the nations, concerning their different sentiments in religion: for as great part of the wars and animosities are owing to the difference of religious opinions, the Prophet informs us, that in those days, all those disputes will be finally terminated; because the nations will all unanimously embrace the word of God, which will be the cause of universal peace in the world; and that, in such a complete and perfect manner, as to induce them to destroy the very weapons of war, as mentioned verse 4th. "And he shall judge among the nations; and

and he shall plead with many peoples : and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation ; neither shall they learn war any more."

That none of the five events pointed out by this prophecy, have as yet been fulfilled, is evident from history ; for the temple built at their return from the Babylonish captivity, was so far from being established, that it was destroyed by the Romans : neither was it exalted by its holiness and sanctity, so as to cause whole nations to flow to it : nor have all the nations hitherto acknowledged the true Unity of God : neither did Jesus, at his coming, judge, and plead with the nations, concerning their different and jarring faiths, so as to terminate their disputes, and entirely annihilate all contention about them ; and thus introduce universal peace into the world. On the contrary, it is manifest, that, since the foundation of Christianity, the sword hath scarce been sheathed ; and its history evinces, that in practice, it is found to be diametrically opposite to the universal peace here foretold by the Prophet, as we meet with little else but intolerance, persecutions,

cutions, bloodshed, massacres, &c. as will be shewn at large, in the immediately succeeding prophecy.

The second prophecy commences at verse 33d, of chapter x. and is continued to the last verse of chapter xii. Before I proceed, it will be necessary to observe, that the Prophet having foretold the destruction of the Assyrians, by comparing it to the slaughter of the Midianites, at the rock of Oreb; and to that of the Egyptians at the Red Sea; proceeds to inform us, that at the coming of the Messiah, (whom he represents as a twig springing up from the stem of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed; which is highly emblematical of the present low estate of the Jews, and the house of David: as if their hope was cut off and decayed, by the uncertainty of the time of their redemption, on account of the long continuance of this dreadful captivity,) God would punish the nations in a yet more exemplary manner, as mentioned verse 33d. "Behold the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts, will lop the flourishing branch with a dreadful crash* ; and the high of stature shall be

* Or, with terror.

cut down, and the lofty shall be brought low: and he shall hew the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty hand." Here the Prophet shews, that those who, during the captivity of the Jews, would be in a most flourishing state, and be proud and haughty, shall all be humbled, brought low, and cut down: but that the Jewish nation, whose power should be entirely decayed, would then spring forth and flourish, &c. as mentioned, chap. xi. verse 1st. &c. till the end of the prophecy; and in which, he has pointed out the great events which are to characterize the days of the true Messiah, as also the peculiar characteristics which are to distinguish him from all other men, and are comprized in the ten following conditions: none of which, as I shall prove, have ever yet been fulfilled: neither at the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, nor at the time of Jesus, nor in his person.

The first, is concerning the genealogy of the Messiah. "But there shall spring forth a rod from the stem of Jesse; and a cion from his roots shall become fruitful." By which we are informed that, the Messiah is
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to be the lineal descendant of David, the son of Jesse: for as God had made choice of David, and had promised him that his throne should be established for ever*, it is necessary, that the Messiah, who is to redeem the nation, should be his lineal descendant, that the regal state may be restored to the house of David, and the promise fully accomplished: for after the coming of the Messiah, the nation will no more go into captivity; so that his throne will then be fully established for ever. But this, did not take place at their return from Babylon; neither is it applicable to that captivity: for the house of David was not then reduced to so low a state; and they all knew that they were to be visited at the end of seventy years, as already mentioned, page 58. Of course, they could not, in strict propriety, be represented by the stem of an old tree, cut down to the very root, and decayed. Neither did it take place during the continuance of the second temple: for the kings which reigned in Judea, during that period, were not the descendants of David, but of the posterity of Aaron the Priest, as the

* 2 Sam. vii, 16. Jerem. xxxiii. 17. &c.

Afmoneans; and others, who were not originally Jews, as Herod, &c. whose father was an Idumean. Neither will any one be so hardy as to say, that it was fulfilled in the person of Jesus: for he did not restore the nation, nor did he fill the throne of David; although it is plain that the Jews expected a temporal prince, (see Matt. ii. 2---6.) and the angel Gabriel is represented as promising Mary, that the LORD God, would give him the throne of his father David, and that he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever. (Luke i. 32, 33.) From all which, his disciples were so fully convinced, that it was one of the offices of the Messiah to restore the kingdom of Israel, that they came to the resolution of actually asking him, before his ascension, whether he purposed, at that time, to restore the kingdom to Israel. (Acts i. 6.) The answer given to them, plainly shews that, he wished to evade giving a direct answer to such a ticklish question. He, however, left the nation groaning under the yoke of the Romans, who not long after, put an end to their kingdom and government. That this kingdom is not spiritual, will be fully proved in the course of the explanation

planation of this prophecy. That he was not the lineal descendant of David, according to the flesh, is manifest from both Matthew and Luke's account of the lineal descent of Jesus, as they bring it down to Joseph, but not to Mary, as I have shewn at large in my answer to Dr. Priestley's Letters to the Jews, Part II. page 72, 73, &c.

Second. Of the exalted degree of the prophetic spirit of the Messiah, mentioned verse 2d. "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him." And which will be in such an exalted degree, that he will be fully informed of the secret thoughts of mankind: so that he will not judge according to the sight of his eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of his ears, as mentioned verse 3d. And as this Prophet has declared elsewhere. "Behold my servant, whom I will uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul hath delight: I have caused my spirit to rest upon him." (Isai. xlii. 1.) But this exalted degree of prophecy, was so far from being bestowed on any person during the continuance of the second temple, that on the contrary, after the death of Malachi, which happened a few years after it was built, the spirit of prophecy

prophecy wholly ceased among the nation, and hath not been revived to this day.

As to the prophetic spirit of Jesus, I think I have clearly shewn, in my Answer to Dr. Priestley's First Letters to the Jews, page 90, &c. &c. And in my Answer to his Letters, Part II. page 47, &c. &c. that he never was endowed with the spirit of prophecy; consequently, he cannot be the person spoken of by the Prophet, as the promised Messiah.

Third. The extraordinary wisdom of the Messiah, as mentioned verse 2d. "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel, and strength; the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the LORD." In the preceding part of this verse, the Prophet speaks of the prophetic spirit of the Messiah, by the appellation of the spirit of the LORD: and in the latter part, he speaks of his extraordinary wisdom. And, it is really worthy of remark, that he does not use the term spirit, by every quality, as, the spirit of wisdom, and the spirit of understanding, &c. but only uses the term spirit to every two qualities. But, if we carefully examine the form
of

of this sentence, so as to be able to enter into the spirit of the language of the Prophet, we shall clearly perceive, that by this mode of expression, he has endeavoured to impress on our minds, a most useful and instructive principle; viz.

First. That those who excel in speculation, or theory, are generally defective in practice: are not knowing or skilful in the arts and ways of mankind: for as the mind is continually occupied with the speculative, it can pay but little attention to the practical.

Second. That he who is able to counsel, and plan great designs, in war, &c. is seldom endowed with strength of body, or courage sufficient, to execute the plans he has counselled: for it is a phenomenon in nature, to find the faculties of both body and mind thus qualified, united in one and the same person.

Third. That philosophical minds, are seldom sound in belief, but generally become scepticks in religion: which made Solomon say, (Eccle. vii. 16.) "Neither make thyself overwise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?"

The Prophet therefore informs us, that as
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the excellent endowments of the Messiah, will all be supernatural, he, of course, will not be subject to any of the defects, incident to those qualities in other men: for which reason, he observes, First, that as the Messiah will be endowed with the spirit of wisdom, he will at the same time be possessed of the spirit of understanding: that is, both speculative, and practical. Second, that being endowed with the spirit of counsel, he will also be possessed of that of strength, and courage; so as to be able to execute whatever he counsels, or plans. Third, that though endowed with the spirit of knowledge, he will nevertheless exercise that knowledge in the fear of the LORD: and not in the promulgation of sceptical opinions, derogatory to the revealed will of God. Hence, it is manifest, that, the wisdom of the Messiah is to be of the most exalted kind, and free from all the defects and blemishes incident to the rest of mankind. And as wisdom in general is included in the three terms, wisdom, counsel, and knowledge, the Prophet mentioned the term spirit but three times, as appertaining to the three species only, in order to shew that, he should
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be perfect in every part of wisdom, and be entirely free from the opposite defects. But the promise of this perfect, and exalted degree of wisdom, united with as extraordinary power of strength, was never accomplished; neither in the endowment of any person at their return from Babylon, or during the continuance of the second temple; nor yet in Jesus: for history does not inform us, that he was thus endowed. Nay, so far was he from being gifted with such extraordinary strength and courage, that the New Testament hath furnished us, with a most remarkable instance of his pusillanimity and want of fortitude, when at the sight of death, he, in agony, sweated drops of blood;—which the virtuous Heathen Philosopher Socrates, who had not the light of Revelation, to guide him to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, was not guilty of at the approach of death: on the contrary, he met it with the greatest calmness and resignation, becoming that of the noblest hero, conscious of his suffering in a good cause: so that the unshaken constancy of soul in Socrates, made the by-standers so ashamed, as to put an end to their grief.

From this instance recorded of Jesus, in the New Testament, it is manifest, that this promise was not fulfilled in his person.

Fourth. That the extraordinary piety of the Messiah will be so eminent, and opposite to that of other princes, that he will abstain from every corporeal pleasure; as will be shewn presently from the language of the Prophet. That the reader may have a perfect idea of the phraseology of the Prophet, it is necessary to observe that, it is an axiom well known among naturalists, that of the five external senses, the most gross and palatable, is the sense of feeling; inasmuch, that it is frequently the cause of our shame: hence, the admonitions against unlawful lusts, whoredom, and adultery. Of the other senses, the next in degree of grossness, is the sense of tasting, and which may also be accounted a species of feeling, as the faculty of tasting is effected by means of the papillae of the tongue: hence also, the admonitions concerning prohibited meats, &c. For which reason, these two senses, on account of their grossness, are never in Scripture attributed to the Supreme Being, as Maimonides justly observes: whence the Prophets,

phets, and other pious men, endeavoured to abstain from the use of those two gross senses as much as possible. As to the sense of smelling, it is of a more refined and spiritual nature; and therefore effects its purpose, although at some distance: hence, it is in Scripture, attributed to the Creator; as mentioned, Gen. viii. 21. "And the LORD smelled the sweet savour." We also find, that princes, and other great personages, are much addicted to fragrant odours, aromatics, and perfumes: of which we have several instances in Scripture, as the embalming of dead bodies, and laying them in sepulchres filled with spices, &c. (Gen. 1. 2. and 2 Chron. xvi. 14.) But, as to the other two senses, viz. those of hearing and seeing, they are yet of a more spiritual nature, and effect their purpose at a much greater distance: and are particularly appropriated to the attainment of wisdom, agreeable to what Solomon says, "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath even made both of them." Prov. xx. 12. Though, as the sense of hearing is peculiarly necessary thereto, he says, "The ear that heareth the reproof of life, abideth among the wise."

Ibid. xv. 31. Hence, it is clear, that of the five external senses, two, viz. the sense of feeling and tasting, are very gross; and two others, viz. hearing and seeing, are of a pure and spiritual nature: and the sense of smelling is a medium between them, being not so gross as the former, nor yet so pure as the latter. The Prophet therefore observes, that the Messiah will be so far from having any propensity towards an immoderate use of the two gross senses, that even the sense of smelling, which is more refined and spiritual, will not be employed by him, as it is by other kings and princes, to minister to their voluptuousness, but in the service of the LORD: for which reason, the Prophet makes use of the following expression, "And he shall scent in the fear of the LORD;" for that is the real sense of *וירא*, and of which, it is scarcely possible to convey an adequate meaning, by a literal translation in the English language: but by which figurative expression, the Prophet gave us to understand, that the Messiah, instead of using the sense of smelling, in a voluptuous manner, as other princes do, he would, on the contrary, employ all his sagacity in the
fear

fear of the LORD: and he farther informs us, that the two most pure and spiritual senses of hearing and seeing, would not be used by him as by the rest of mankind, for, "That not according to the sight of his eyes shall he judge: neither according to the hearing of his ears shall he reprove." And which leads us to,

The Fifth condition, viz. the exalted degree of the Messiah's justice, which he will administer in such an upright, just, and equitable manner, not only to the rich and great, but likewise to the lowest and meanest of mankind, that his decisions will be acknowledged by all to be truly Godlike. That the Messiah is to be a great temporal Judge, is manifest from the different expressions of this Prophet, for in chap. ii. verse 4th. he says, "And he shall judge among the nations," &c. In chap. xlii. verse 1st. &c. "I have made my spirit rest upon him: *and* he shall bring forth judgment to the nations." Verse 3d. "He shall pronounce judgement unto truth." Verse 4th. "Until he hath firmly seated judgement in the earth, for the distant nations shall earnestly wait for his law." From all which, it is clear, that
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the Messiah is to be invested with the office of Judge, and that, not for his own nation only, but for all the nations of the earth. And, in the passage now under consideration, the Prophet plainly points out to us, the great distinction between the Messiah in his character of Judge, and that of all other judges: for, although it is the duty of every judge to pronounce judgement, according to what he sees and hears given in evidence before him, yet, is it possible that, he may be imposed upon by the false representations of advocates, and witnesses: and thus, be induced to deliver an unjust sentence; but the Messiah, will not judge according to the sight of his eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of his ears; for he will be perfectly acquainted with the true state of all things, by means of the exalted prophetic spirit he will be gifted with, so that it will be impossible to impose upon him: he therefore, “Will judge the poor with righteousness, and with equity will he reprove the meek of the earth.” The rich and powerful will not then be able, by means of mercenary advocates, and perjured witnesses, to debar the poor from obtaining justice

justice: neither will designing men, and court sycophants, be able to slander and vilify their meek and truly humble neighbours to him, so as to induce him to reprove them in anger, and disgrace them without cause, that they may have an opportunity of begging their estates or property, as is too much the practice in the courts of Princes: for he will only reprove in equity, that is, not without just and sufficient occasion. But no person whatever, ever maintained such an exalted character, as is here described by the Prophet, in the fourth and fifth conditions of the character of the Messiah, either as a Judge, or in practising such piety, and self-denial, by abstaining from all corporeal pleasures, even the most refined ones: neither at their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor during the continuance of the second temple. Neither was this character fulfilled in the person of Jesus, as I shall shew presently: for he was so far from abstaining from the use of the sense of smelling, in the manner of Princes, that on the contrary, he seemed desirous of perfectly imitating them, as appears from his so highly approving of the woman's anointing him with

with a box full of precious ointment, against so great a waste of which, his disciples shewed indignation, (Matt. xxvi. 7, 8.) for according to Mark, it was so precious, that it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence : Mark xiv. 5. As to Luke, he gives us an account of another anointing, as appears to me, for that mentions the feet of Jesus being anointed, instead of pouring it on his head, as mentioned by Matthew and Mark : Vide Luke vii. 38. John seems also to relate a different anointing : for he differs both as to time, and circumstances, and as appears to me, in place also, (see John xii. 1, 8.) and describes it, as anointing his feet. And as from these accounts it is plain, that Jesus was greatly pleased with, and highly approved of it, it is clear, that the fourth condition which the Prophet has in this prophecy mentioned as characteristic of the Messiah, was not fulfilled in the person of Jesus : much less, the fifth ; namely, that of Judge in the most exalted degree, and universal jurisdiction : for he was so far from possessing such an extent of judicial power, that it is plain, from his own words, he was not invested with the power of a Judge

Judge in the least: for when the man applied to him, to speak to his brother, that he should divide the inheritance with him, he answered, "Man, who made me a judge?" Luke xii. 14. And in John viii. 15. he says, "I judge no man." Nay, he tells us plainly, that it was not his province, "For I came not to judge the world." Ibid. xii. 47. And what is yet more remarkable, and fully evinces the truth of my position, is, his making use of an expression so diametrically opposite to that used by the Prophet, "As I hear, I judge." Ibid. v. 30. Whereas the Prophet expressly says, "That not, according to the sight of his eyes shall he judge," &c. From all which, it is manifest, that this condition, in the character of the Messiah, was not fulfilled in the person of Jesus; consequently, he could not be the person predicted by the Prophet, as the promised Messiah.

The sixth condition is, the miraculous power which the Messiah is to be endowed with, by means of his exalted prophetic spirit, and extraordinary piety, mentioned in the preceding conditions: agreeable to what the Prophet says, "And he shall smite the earth

with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked." The meaning of which is, that he will not be under the necessity of raising an army, in order to punish a nation that may be guilty of disobedience to his commands, or the laws of God ; for, with the rod of his mouth shall he smite the earth : by means of his miraculous power, he will be able to command the elements, and punish them with fire, pestilence, famine, &c. without being obliged to use sword or spear ; for all the weapons of war, will be destroyed, as mentioned, chap. ii. 4. Neither will there be any occasion for executioners to put the guilty individuals to death: for he will slay the wicked with the breath of his lips: so that whether it be individuals, or whole nations that should be guilty, and deserving of punishment, he will be able to punish them by supernatural means: such as commanding the earth to open, and swallow them up, as it did Korah ; or by calling down fire from heaven, as did Elijah ; or by ordering wild beasts to devour them, as was done by Elifha. So, that strictly speaking, the rod with which he will punish them, will be his mouth, for he will need no other weapon, than

than the breath of his lips. Now, as it is manifest, that this extraordinary miraculous power hath not been possessed by any person whatever, either at their return from Babylon, or during the continuance of the second temple, nor yet in the person of Jesus, it is clear, that it remains to be fulfilled in the person of the true Messiah.

The seventh condition is, the universal peace that is to take place in the world in the days of the Messiah, as mentioned in verses 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th. "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins; and faithfulness the cincture of his reins. Then shall the wolf take up his abode with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, *shall come together*; and a little child shall lead them. And the heifer and the she-bear shall feed together; *together* shall their young ones lie down; and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. And the suckling shall play upon the hole of the aspic; and upon the den of the basilisk shall the new-weaned child lay his hand. They shall not hurt, nor destroy, in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the know-

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ledge of the LORD, as the waters *that* cover the *depths* of the sea." In these verses, the Prophet, by a variety of the most animated, beautiful, and elegant imagery, hath finely expressed, not only the peace, harmony, and happiness, that is to exist in the days of the Messiah, but has also clearly pointed out to us the immediate causes of this universal peace; for if we duly consider the cause of the wars which have hitherto distracted and desolated so many parts of the known world, we shall find, that the motives thereto have been of two kinds: namely, either a thirst for power and dominion; and which may not improperly be stiled legal Robbery. Or, on account of the difference of religious tenets and opinions. The Prophet therefore, in order to shew us that, these causes will then cease, says in regard of the first, "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins." The meaning of which is, that justice and righteousness will be so conspicuous in the character of the Messiah, as if they adhered to his loins as a girdle; and as it is plain, from the fifth condition, that he will be invested with the office of universal Judge; he of course, will not suffer any depredation, or
usurpation

usurpation, to be committed by any nation, however powerful it may be, over its weaker neighbours : for by his authority, he will oblige every one to be contented with his own portion, without encroaching on that of his neighbour.

As to the second cause, he observes, “ And faithfulness the cincture of his reins.” By faithfulness, he properly meant, a strict adherence to the true faith, and the worship of the One true God : for that, and that only, will then take place in the world, as is clear from the words of the Prophet, verse 9th, and the several prophecies cited in the course of this work. And therefore, when these two causes of war and bloodshed will be thus finally removed, the consequence will be, universal love and peace among the human race.

With regard to the state of peace and innocence, which as the Prophet so beautifully describes, is to exist among the brute creation, in the days of the Messiah, there are different opinions among the commentators; for some understand it in a figurative sense, and suppose, that the lion, leopard, wolf, &c. denote wicked and violent men, who, by their

their rapacity, harass and disturb the peaceable part of mankind: but whose brutish and savage dispositions will then be tamed. Others, take it in a literal sense, and consider it as a promise of the renewal of what the Poets call the golden age, when the wild beasts will grow tame; and serpents, and other poisonous creatures will become harmless; so that all will be peace and harmony. Now, whether we understand it in a literal, or figurative sense, it is plain that, it evidently points out the love and kindness, that is then universally to exist: though, I am clearly of opinion, that the prophecy was intended to declare both these purposes, by informing us, that not only violence among men would cease, but that the brute creation should also lose their ferocity, and dwell in harmony with the domestic animals*: the
venemous

* That there is nothing impossible, nor even improbable in this, may be clearly perceived from Scripture: for if the Supreme Being, to punish Pharaoh, could command the mixture of ravenous beasts, to come and destroy the land, &c. why may he not in the days of the Messiah, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, deprive them of their malignity, so that they may no more be hurtful? Indeed, I can see no reason why God should not be able, by his omnipotence, to effect the one as well as the other. But, what appears to me, decisive

venomous creatures likewise, will no more hurt nor destroy : and the reason of this extraordinary and wonderful change, immediately follows, " For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD," &c. Whence it is manifest, that universal peace, is not only to take place in the days of the Messiah, but that the cause of that peace will be, that the whole earth will be filled and illuminated with the knowledge of the LORD : that is, that all will know and ac-

tive in favour of what I have advanced, is, the language of the Prophet, " And the lion shall eat straw like an ox." From which, it is plain, that this change of nature in the ravenous animals will be real, and in consequence thereof, they are to become harmless. For it is well known, that all such creatures, as are of the granivorous kind, are inoffensive : whereas, those of the carnivorous kind, are of voracious, cruel, and sanguinary dispositions ; for it is the nature of such food, to engender such dispositions : and this I take to be the reason, that when God gave Noah permission to eat flesh, he said to him, " And surely your blood of your lives will I require, &c. (Gen. ix. 5.) This admonition, he judged necessary, as a curb to the cruel and sanguinary inclinations, which might probably proceed from their being allowed animal food : and for the same reason, he prohibited the eating of blood, (Gen. iv.) as of a yet more pernicious tendency. The Prophet therefore, in order to convince us, that the change will be real, assures us, that the lion and other carnivorous animals will eat straw like an ox : and thus, will become as harmless and inoffensive, as those of the granivorous kind.

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knowledge, and worship the One true God only.

But, let us now pause for a moment, and carefully and attentively examine, whether these great and glorious promises have ever yet been fulfilled: if they have, I, as well as every rational person, must fairly acknowledge, that the person, by means of whose appearance, these wonderful predictions have been accomplished, is truly the Messiah foretold by the Prophet. If, on the contrary, we find that, these events have never yet taken place at any time in the world, I presume it must be clear even to the meanest capacity, that the true Messiah hath never yet appeared.

That these promises were not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor during the existence of the second temple, need not be insisted on, as it is so obvious from both sacred and profane history: which is a manifest proof, that that was not the true Redemption, which was to take place in the latter days, i. e. at the time of the Messiah.

That the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, never had existence, either at, or since the
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the promulgation of Christianity, must be evident to every candid and impartial mind, the least acquainted with its history, from about the end of the third century to the present; as it contains little else but divisions, persecutions, bloodshed, massacres, &c. For Christians have not only waded through torrents of the blood of Jews, and other infidels, as they are pleased to call the poor Indians, &c. by persecuting them with fire and sword, and exercising every other cruelty upon them: but have persecuted each other, with such wild fury and rancour, as is scarce credible of human beings, formed in the image of God.

To shew that I have not been guilty of falsehood, or misrepresentation, by too high a colouring of the picture, I shall, in support of what I have advanced, produce the evidence of Christian writers themselves, and such, as I judge, are allowed to be orthodox; at least of whom, I have never heard any thing to the contrary.

The author of the Apology of Ben Mordecai, speaking of the divisions among Christians, observes†, “ And it was this dispute

† Ben Mordecai, page 6.

“ that gave rise to the prevailing opinions I
 “ am now speaking of, both among us, and
 “ the Mahometans ; that Christians in ge-
 “ neral are Polytheists and Idolators. This
 “ accusation was first begun by Christians
 “ themselves ; by way of excuse for the
 “ dreadful persecutions they exercised against
 “ one another : which were followed, ac-
 “ cording to the just judgement of God, by
 “ the ruin of the Christian churches in
 “ *Asia* ; and the introduction of Maho-
 “ metism.” He farther observes†, “ If
 “ we look into the Ecclesiastical historians,
 “ even from the third century ; we shall
 “ find the Christian world to have then had
 “ a very different aspect from what some
 “ authors have represented : and so far from
 “ being endued with active graces, zeal, and
 “ devotion, and established within itself
 “ with purity of doctrine, union, and firm
 “ profession of faith ; that, on the contrary,
 “ by the ambition of the clergy, &c. they
 “ lost the whole substance of their reli-
 “ gion.”

Dr. Prideaux, speaking of these disturbances
 observes, of the Christians, “ Having drawn

† Sale's Koran 33.

“ the abstrusest niceties into the controversy,
 “ they did thereby so destroy PEACE, LOVE,
 “ and CHARITY, among them; that they
 “ lost the whole substance of their religion;
 “ and in a manner drove Christianity quite
 “ out of the world: so that the *Saracens*,
 “ taking advantage of the weakness of
 “ power, and the distractions of councils,
 “ which these divisions had caused; soon
 “ over-ran, with a terrible devastation, all
 “ the Eastern provinces of the Roman em-
 “ pire; turned every where their Churches
 “ into Mosques, and their worship into a
 “ horrid superstition; and forced on them
 “ that abominable imposture of Mahome-
 “ tism †.” “ The unhappy contests, which
 “ in the fifth century, divided the churches,
 “ particularly in the east; occasioned da-
 “ mages, which Christianity will never be
 “ able to recover. These sects, viz. of the
 “ *Nestorians*, and *Eutychians*, partly from
 “ idleness and superstition, and partly from
 “ the particular grudge, envy, and malice,
 “ of the Ecclesiastics, gave the finishing
 “ stroke to mutual forbearance in matters of
 “ religion. From that time, there was no-

† Prideaux's Life of Mahomet.

“ thing to be seen in the East, but proscrip-
 “ tions, massacres, and rage*.”

He farther observes, that “ *Etherius*†, a
 “ Bishop of the fifth century, who was
 “ persecuted for *Nestorianism*, says, I pass
 “ over in silence the chains, the prisons, the
 “ confiscations, the marks of infamy, the
 “ massacres that call for compassion: the
 “ enormity of which is such, that even those,
 “ who had the misfortune to be witnesses of
 “ them, are scarce able to believe them to
 “ be true. All these tragedies are matters
 “ of sport to the Bishops; among whom,
 “ want of bowels passes for courage: they
 “ call their cruelty, zeal; and they honour
 “ their cheats and impostures with the name
 “ of wisdom. In this unhappy age, mo-
 “ nasteries endured sieges: they came to
 “ blows in councils; they entered into the
 “ churches with arms; they treated with
 “ the utmost cruelty all those, that were
 “ suspected of favouring opinions, which
 “ scarce any body understood‡: not even
 “ those who defended them with the greatest

* Reland's Four Treatises, page 165 to 169.

† Etherius Tyanorum Episcopus, inter Opera Theodoretii, Tom. V. page 688,

‡ Ben Mordecai, Letter I. Note 4, page 82—85.

“ obstinacy

“ obstinacy and stiffness*. And their con-
 “ tests for preferment were carried to such
 “ a height at *Rome*, for the Episcopal seat,
 “ by *Damasus*, and *Ursicinus*, that there were
 “ no less than one hundred and thirty-seven
 “ killed in one day†. It was on account
 “ of these divisions and cruelties, which tore
 “ the church to pieces, that *Grotius* says,
 “ *Qui legit, &c.* He that reads Ecclesiasti-
 “ cal History, what does he meet with but
 “ the vices of the Bishops‡. And *Amnia-*
 “ *nus Marcellinus* says, No wild beasts are
 “ so furious against men, as the generality
 “ of Christians are against one another.
 “ *Nullus infestas hominibus bestias, ut sunt sibi*
 “ *ferales expertus§.* An instance or two,”
 he observes||, “ of the fury and barbarity of
 “ these times, will give a better notion of
 “ them, than to deal in generals.”

The first he produces, is, “ that of *Hypa-*
 “ *tia*, in the fifth century. She was a wo-
 “ man so famous for learning, that she ex-
 “ celled in all philosophy; and taught in
 “ the schools (which *Plotinus* continued;)

* Reland's Four Treatises. † Sale's Koran, 33, 44.

‡ Ep. xxii. page 1.

§ Ben Mordecai, Letter I. page 8. || Lib. 22.

“ so that she had scholars out of many
 “ countries, and was oft with Princes and
 “ Rulers, and for her modesty and gravity,
 “ was much esteemed. *Orestes*, the Go-
 “ vernor, often talking with her, the people
 “ said, it was by Her means that He was
 “ not reconciled to Cyril. They laid hold
 “ on her, drew her into a church, stripped
 “ her stark-naked, rased the skin, and tore
 “ the flesh off her body with sharp shells,
 “ till she died. They quartered her body,
 “ and burned her to ashes*.”

The other instance, is that “ of *Proterius*
 “ us, Bishop of Alexandria; who, flying
 “ from the people’s rage, got into the Bap-
 “ tistery, a place revered by the Barbari-
 “ ans and the fiercest men; but these furi-
 “ ous people, set on by their Bishop Timo-
 “ thy, (whom they had chosen) neither re-
 “ verencing the place, the worship, the
 “ time, (which was Easter;) nor the office
 “ of priesthood, did strike the blameless
 “ man, and kill him cruelly, with six more;
 “ and dragging his wounded carcase every
 “ where, and cruelly drawing it about
 “ through almost all the parts of the city,

* Baxter’s Church History, page 85.

.. did

“ did mercilessly beat the senseless corpse,
 “ and divided his parts, and spared not to
 “ tear his entrails with their teeth, like
 “ dogs; and, casting the rest of his body
 “ into the fire, they scattered his ashes into
 “ the wind, transcending the fierceness of
 “ all beasts: and the architect of this was
 “ (their new Bishop) Timothy*.”

He farther observes, “ In this state of
 “ confusion and madness among the Chris-
 “ tians, *Arabia* became a secure retreat for
 “ those who were proscribed; and was peo-
 “ pled at the expence of the *Greek* em-
 “ pire†.”

He then quotes Reland, who says, “ It is
 “ certain, from Christian and Arabian au-
 “ thors; that, before the preaching of *Ma-*
 “ *homet*, the Christian religion was known
 “ in *Arabia*, several tribes having embraced
 “ it. The *Nestorians*, on one side, whose
 “ communion extended formerly all the
 “ way to *China*, through the Northern pro-
 “ vinces of *Asia*; and the followers of *Eu-*
 “ *tychius* and *Dioscurus*, spreading themselves
 “ in *Egypt*, *Armenia*, and *Mesopotamia*,

* See Binnius, 147, 151.—Baxter 110.

† Ben Mordecai, Letter I. page 9.

“ brought

" brought over the whole kingdom of the
 " *Abyssines*; and the whole kingdom of the
 " *Homorites*, in the South of *Arabia*, had
 " embraced it. Nevertheless, in a short
 " time, we saw all these unhappy nations
 " embrace Mahometism. To what can we
 " attribute so rapid and general a revolution,
 " and such success to an imposture; but to
 " the scandal occasioned by the fatal divisions
 " of Christians, and the proscriptions and
 " massacres practised upon one another*.

In another place†, he says, " The causes,
 " why *Christianity* has been lost, in several
 " parts where it was once received; and
 " not received in others, where it has been
 " preached; are chiefly these two: first,
 " the corruptions of its doctrines; and se-
 " condly, the wickedness of its professors."

1st. " The corruptions of its doctrines, as
 " *Cyril* relates, was objected to the *Christi-*
 " *ans*, by the Emperor *Julian*, but a few
 " years after the council of *Nice*, in these
 " words: " Your adding to that antient
 " dead man *Jesus*, many new dead men,
 " who can sufficiently abominate?" And

* Reland, page 165, to 169.

† Ben Mordecai, Letter VII. page 147, &c.

" again,

“ again, “ If *Christians* had adhered to the
 “ precepts of the *Hebrews*, they would have
 “ worshipped *one* God, instead of many :
 “ and not a man, or rather *many* unhappy
 “ men.” And he accuses them, that they
 “ adored the wood of the cross; making
 “ figures of it on their foreheads, and be-
 “ fore their houses*. And in the days of
 “ *Cyril*, we find, that the Virgin *Mary* was
 “ called the Queen of Heaven, and the Mo-
 “ ther of God ; and so decreed to be in the
 “ councils of *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon* ; which
 “ are tests of Heresy in *England* : And *Cy-*
 “ *ril* himself, who is said to have presided at
 “ the council of *Ephesus*, made no scruple
 “ to call her the Complement or Supple-
 “ ment of the Holy Trinity : and the *Col-*
 “ *lyridians* worshipped her as a God ; and
 “ said there were two Gods besides the Fa-
 “ ther ; viz. *Christ*, and the Virgin *Ma-*
 “ *ry*†.”

“ And the Impostor *Mahomet*, not only
 “ objects to the *Christians*, that they asso-
 “ ciated their Doctors and Monks with

* Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, page 208.

† Four Treatises, page 174. Epiph. Haer. lxxv. 7. Lib.

3. Sale's Koran, page 35.

“ almighty God in their worship ; but he
 “ also accuses them of corrupting the doc-
 “ trine of the *Unity*, the fundamental Article
 “ of all true Religion ; by their notions of
 “ the *Trinity**. And it must be confessed ;
 “ that the *Christians* have at least so far ob-
 “ scured and unsettled this great truth, by
 “ the decrees of their councils ; that many
 “ of the learned, both antient and modern,
 “ have been at a loss to know, whether they
 “ worship *one*, or *three*. For, in order to
 “ maintain the doctrine of the Divine œ-
 “ cundity, as it was settled at the council
 “ of *Nice* ; we are told, that God is not
 “ *unicus* ; (the only God) ; but only *unus*,
 “ (one God) : that this *Unity* is of so tran-
 “ scendant a nature, as not to come under
 “ number † ; and that God is not one in
 “ number, but only in nature ‡. Other
 “ *Christians*, on the other hand, declare,
 “ that

* See Letters I. page 6.

† Allix. Jew. Chap. 121. 68.

‡ Basil, and Justin Martyr. See Letter I. page 91.
 These writers meant to oppose the Sabellian notion of *one* nu-
 merical substance : by maintaining *three* numerical substances
 of the same generical nature : as three men are *one* in nature,
 though *three* in number.

“ that

“ that God is one, both in *number*, and in
 “ *nature* ; one numerical substance, consist-
 “ ing of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost :
 “ which *Athanasius* and *Epiphanius*, declare
 “ to be *Sabellianism*. Others say ; that
 “ God is *three* substances joined together in-
 “ separably by an *Emperichoresis* ; and that,
 “ if it was not for this *Emperichoresis*, there
 “ would be *three* Gods ; and that no one of
 “ them is God, exclusive of the other two :
 “ (and, if this be true, it must follow una-
 “ voidably, that, without this *Emperichore-*
 “ *sis*, there would be no God at all) : and
 “ thus the very Being of God, as well as
 “ his *Unity*, is supposed to depend upon—
 “ we know not what—most certainly upon
 “ what does not come under our idea of ne-
 “ cessary existence : and this, we are told
 “ by the learned, was the doctrine of the
 “ *Nicene* council*. But others, in direct
 “ opposition to this, declare ; that *every one*
 “ of them is of himself both God and
 “ Lord† : which is condemned by *Atha-*
 “ *nasius*, *Bull*, *Petavius*, &c. as being Poly-
 “ theism. *Athanasius* says, “ We do not ac-

* See Letter I. page 32. 124.

† Athan. Creed.

“ knowledge three Hypostasis, divided, or
 “ separate by themselves ; that we may not
 “ comply with the Pagan Polytheism*.
 “ And some divines have drawn the line of
 “ their orthodoxy so nicely, as to assert, that
 “ the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are
 “ *three*, and every one *distinctly* God : and
 “ yet deny that they are *three*, and every one
 “ a *distinct* God†. These different notions
 “ were brought into the Church, at diffe-
 “ rent times ; as the *Sabellian*, *Athanasian*,
 “ or *Pseudo-Athanasian* heresies prevailed ;
 “ and are all of them established together,
 “ in some of the *Christian* churches ; as if
 “ they were all orthodox, and consistent
 “ with one another. The *first*, by the
 “ Council of *Lateran*‡ ; and by the second
 “ and fourth articles agreed upon at *London*,
 “ in 1562 ; and by the proper preface in
 “ the communion service for *Trinity* Sun-
 “ day : the *second* of them, by making the
 “ four first general councils the tests of he-
 “ resy§ : and the *third*, by the *Pseudo-*
 “ *Athanasian* Creed : for it seems to be a

* See Cudworth, page 614. † Beverege.

‡ See Letter I. page 119. Note 20.

§ Blackstone's Comment. Vol. IV. page 49, 50. See also Letter I. page 32.

“ kind

“ kind of infatuation among the *Christians*;
“ if it does not proceed from mere carelessness; that there is not one of the Western Churches, but what pretends to follow the faith of *Athanasius*; and yet they
“ are every one of them condemned by him,
“ (in their principles) as *Sabellians*, and *Polytheists*.—The confusion and uncertainty
“ of the *Christian's* faith is no less; when
“ they assert, that there are two persons in
“ the Godhead, co-ëqual and co-ëternal
“ with the Father; from whom they received their existence. For, if they mean
“ by this, that there are three conscious Beings, co-ëqual and co-ëternal, they must
“ necessarily mean *three* Gods: and, if they
“ mean one Supreme God, under three different characters, they must allow, that
“ the One Supreme God did suffer pain and
“ death; which is the heresy of the *Patripassians*:---and, if they mean unsubstantial characters, or modes of existence,
“ then they must hold, that it was a Character only, and not a real substantial Being, that suffered for mankind; and there
“ can be no medium between a real substance, and an unsubstantial character, or
“ mode

“ mode of existence; and therefore, to
 “ speak as some do, of a character WHO---
 “ has no meaning in it; and is no language.
 “ In short, the plain doctrine of the *Unity*,
 “ viz. that God is One, and One only*,
 “ which ought to be the first article in every
 “ *Christian* church, has never been maintained
 “ in *any one* of them, without some
 “ reservation or explanation; that has
 “ rendered it as doubtful, as if it had never
 “ been asserted,”

He farther observes†, “ It is a certain
 “ fact, that, while the Christians were employed
 “ in persecuting one another, because they
 “ could not agree in their enquiries into the
 “ metaphysical nature of almighty God; and the
 “ solution of the

* See Letter I. page 123. Note 28. where he produces the definition of Maimonides. But as that is only for the Latin Reader, I have here subjoined a correct translation from the original Hebrew, in הלכות יסודי התורה. i. e. The constitutions of the fundamentals of the law, Chap. i. sec. 4. This God is One, and not two, or more than two, but One only; whose Unity is not like that of any other individual that exists in the world: not One in species, which includes several individuals; nor One in body, which is divisible into parts and extremes; but such an Unity, that there is not another unity like it in the world.

† Letter VII. page 150.

“ above

“ above difficulties, and many others of their
 “ own invention, which had filled the
 “ church with unintelligible and contradic-
 “ tory notions: the Mahometans, by preach-
 “ ing up the plain doctrine of the *Unity*, as
 “ it was revealed by Moses; (that God is
 “ One, and One only;) drew over, merely
 “ by the force of this one plain truth, al-
 “ most all Asia and Africa to the profession
 “ of their Religion.

“ I know, says the Author of “ *Reflex-*
 “ *ions on Mahometism;*” that it is com-
 “ monly said, the Religion of *Mahomet* was
 “ established by force of arms; and doing
 “ violence to people’s consciences. But
 “ this violence was not such, as is common-
 “ ly represented †; and was not used, for
 “ the first twelve years; nor till after per-
 “ suasion had gained him a strong party to
 “ support his pretensions. Till that time,
 “ he propagated his Religion by fair means;
 “ so that the whole success of his enter-
 “ prise, before his flight to *Medina*, must be
 “ attributed, as Mr. *Sale* observes, to per-
 “ suasion, and not to compulsion ‡; agree-
 “ ably to what he declares in the *Koran*,

† Four Treatises, page 170. ‡ Sale’s *Koran*, 48, 49.

“ *Let*

“ *Let there be no violence in Religion* †;
 “ though he afterwards practised it, follow-
 “ ing the example of the Christians; who
 “ used the same method to propagate, not
 “ only the *Homöousian* doctrine; but also
 “ the genuine Apostolic Faith, which is ge-
 “ nerally misrepresented under the name of
 “ *Arianism*; though held in the Church
 “ long before *Arius* was born. --- Besides, we
 “ find, that some *Tartarian* Princes, in-
 “ structed first by the *Armenians*, and after-
 “ wards by the *Monks*, embraced the Chris-
 “ tian Religion; but in a very little time
 “ rejected it, and became *Mahometans*. And,
 “ in 1246, Pope *Innocent IV.* sent an Em-
 “ bassay to *Bati*, Cham of *Tartary*, inviting
 “ him to the *Christian* Religion: but when
 “ the Cham heard the chief points of the
 “ *Christian* Faith, the Trinity, Incarnation,
 “ Transubstantiation, &c. he thanked the
 “ Pope for his kindness, and promised to
 “ make no incursion into the *Christian* coun-
 “ tries for five years: but withall declared
 “ himself not well satisfied with *Christiani-*
 “ *ty*, as it was represented to him: and im-
 “ mediately after, the *Saracens* sent a like

§ Sale's Koran. chap. ii. page 31.

“ Embassage

“ Embassy to *Bati*; recommending to
 “ him Mahometism, as the more plausible
 “ sect; and these prevailed: *Bati*, and the
 “ whole nation of the *Tartars*, submitting
 “ to *Mahometism*; in which they continue
 “ to this day†. And Mr. *Morgan*, in his
 “ history of *Barbary*, makes the same ob-
 “ servation with regard to the Africans;
 “ that they were not reduced from *Paga-*
 “ *nism*, by mere force of arms; but be-
 “ cause they liked the measures taken by the
 “ *Saracens* to make them relinquish their
 “ idolatry, better than any arguments the
 “ Christians could invent‡: and there can
 “ be no wonder at this, when we consider,
 “ that the *Christians* were guilty of idolatry
 “ themselves. I will not here question,
 “ says Mr. *Mede*, whether the *Christian* or
 “ *Mahometan* be the greater idolator; though
 “ the doubt might soon be resolved: seeing
 “ it is well known that the *Mahometans*
 “ worship no images§.”

“ 2d. Another reason, why Christianity
 “ hath been lost in several parts of the world,

† Unit. Tracts, Vol. II. page 19.

‡ Morgan's History of Barbary, page 146, 159, 166.

§ Jos. Mede's Works, page 795.

“ where it was once received ; and not re-
 “ ceived in others where it was preached , is
 “ the wickedness of the *Christians*, and their
 “ continual animosities and persecutions.
 “ And so in *Africa* we are told, by good
 “ authority, that the *Christians* owed their
 “ ruin to themselves : and what made the
 “ *African Moors* so passive, and ready to fall
 “ in with the *Mahometans*, was the hope of
 “ ridding themselves of their greatest eye-
 “ sore ; the imperious, impiously vicious,
 “ insatiably avaritious, and consequently,
 “ insufferably tyrannical *Christians*†. And
 “ even, with regard to persecution, for con-
 “ science sake, the same scene of abomina-
 “ tion, which began in *Asia*, was acted over
 “ again in *Africa*, with the same success.
 “ The authority of persecuting to blood,
 “ was procured from the Emperor *Honorius* ;
 “ by four Bishops sent from *Carthage* to that
 “ purpose, A. C. 410. And his Edicts,
 “ comprehended all Dissenters, who de-
 “ parted ever so little, *vel levi argumento*,
 “ from the established faith§. Thus the
 “ Christians murdered one another, for

† Morgan, as above.

§ Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, page 298.

“ difference

“ difference of opinion ; and were severely
 “ punished for all their abominations, by
 “ the just judgement of God.

“ Eusebius considers the persecution un-
 “ der *Dioclesian*, in that light. *Socrates*,
 “ speaking of the first persecution of the
 “ *Novatians* at Rome by Pope *Innocent*, ob-
 “ serves, that at the same instant the *Goths*
 “ invaded Italy, and became the lords of
 “ all. And, about seventeen years after the
 “ Bishops of *Carthage* had procured the per-
 “ secuting edicts from *Honorius*, the coun-
 “ try was invaded by the *Vandals*, under *Gen-*
 “ *seric* ; where the Christians had more than
 “ seven hundred Bishopricks ; and above
 “ five millions of men were destroyed : so
 “ that *Procopius* observes, it was next to a
 “ miracle to see a man. And afterwards,
 “ when the *Saracens* became masters of
 “ *Africa*, they asserted the same power over
 “ the consciences of *Christians*, which the
 “ *Christians* with no more right or justice
 “ had exercised before over one another ;
 “ and those who would not immediately
 “ become *Mahometans*, were either killed or
 “ banished. And indeed, with what ap-
 “ pearance of reason could it be expected ;

“ that the just judgements of God should
 “ fall upon the *Heathens*, for persecuting
 “ the *Christians*; and yet that the *Christians*
 “ should escape them, when they murder-
 “ ed one another? When any thing hap-
 “ pened unfortunately at *Rome*, in the days
 “ of *Nero*, &c. the immediate cry was, to
 “ burn the *Christians*: and did not the *Chri-*
 “ *tians* act upon the very same principle,
 “ when *Nestorius* declared to the Emperor
 “ *Theodosius*; clear me the Earth of *Here-*
 “ *ticks*; and I will in return give you the
 “ Kingdom of Heaven: assist me to de-
 “ stroy the Hereticks; and I will assist you
 “ to destroy the Persians? And what was
 “ the consequence of this diabolical prac-
 “ tice afterwards, in the days of *Justinian*;
 “ but the desolation of whole Provinces.”

And a late writer observes||, “ Nothing
 “ has given the world more offence, and
 “ cause of stumbling, than the jars, contra-
 “ dictions, wrangling, and divisions, among
 “ those who profess to be the disciples of
 “ Christ, except it be their scandalous lives
 “ and conversations: these two things, ta-

|| Wincheſter's Lectures on the Prophecies, Sect. XII.
 Vol II. page 97.

“ ken

“ ken together, have prevented the Hea-
 “ then, in all ages, from becoming mem-
 “ bers of the Christian church. And what
 “ has abundantly made the matter worse,
 “ instead of mending it, has been the into-
 “ lerant spirit which has prevailed among
 “ all sects, filling them with wrath and ha-
 “ tred against those who differ from them :
 “ and which has frequently caused them,
 “ not only to hate, but to persecute and to
 “ kill each other. Animosities between mi-
 “ nisters --- divisions in churches --- hatred
 “ of one sect against another, rising to per-
 “ secution, even to death --- and the wicked
 “ lives of most professors of religion in all
 “ countries : --- all these things conjoined,
 “ have given such a fatal blow to Christia-
 “ nity in the world, that it never can reco-
 “ ver ’till Jesus comes.”

From the specimens here produced, of the
 persecutions, divisions, animosities, and the
 intolerant spirit of Christians, it is clear
 from all history, that Christianity cannot be
 the Peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as
 foretold by the Prophet. But, need we the
 authority of History in proof of this ? Have
 we not the evidence of our own senses ? Can
 any

any honest impartial person lay his hand on his heart, and declare that, the known world at present enjoys such universal peace? Surely Not! On the contrary, do we not find, that war, with all its concomitant horrors, rages at this instant*, in the most dreadful manner between several powerful states, and which, if not soon put an end to, by the interposition of Providence, will probably involve all Europe in the same calamity†? But, can we in reason, expect the effect, when the cause has not yet taken place? Certainly not. And as the Prophet has informed us, in language as plain as words can express, that the cause of this universal peace will be, that, "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters *that* cover the *depths* of the sea," as already mentioned, page 92—95. it is necessary that we enquire, whether such universal knowledge hath ever yet been poured on ALL the earth: for, unless we can ascertain the existence of the cause, it is in vain to look for the effect. Now, I think, it must appear clear to every person, the least conversant in History, that the cause at no time, ever yet existed:

* The year 1792. † Since writing the above, this has actually been the consequence.

for all the world hath never yet been brought to the *true* knowledge of the LORD. On the contrary, almost the greatest part of mankind, are as yet ignorant of the *true* knowledge of JEHOVAH: for they are either plunged into gross and stupid idolatry, or miserably torn and divided into various factions and opinions concerning the plurality of persons in the Godhead, as may be seen in the preceding pages: and it would be the height of madness to look for the effect without the existence of the cause. From all which, it is manifest that, the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as foretold by the Prophet, hath never existed: but is most certainly to take place, at the coming of the true Messiah, as may be clearly perceived from the conditions above specified.

That Jesus could not be the Messiah, whose peaceable kingdom is here predicted by the Prophet, may be fully evinced from the words of Jesus himself. Matth. x. 21. For having given them their mission, and foreseeing the effects of it; namely, that some would believe, and others would not; he says, "And the brother shall deliver up
" the

“ the brother to death : and the father the
“ child : and the children shall rise up
“ against their parents, and cause them to
“ be put to death.” This, is most dreadful, and which may easily account for what he says, in the succeeding verse, “ And
“ ye shall be hated of all men for my
“ name’s sake.” No wonder indeed ; if they, by their preaching, should occasion such horrid scenes.

In verse 34, he says, “ Think not that I
“ am come to send peace on earth : I came
“ not to send peace, but a sword. For I
“ came to set a man at variance against his
“ father, and the daughter against her mother,
“ and the daughter-in law against her
“ mother-in-law. And a man’s foes shall
“ be they of his own household,” In Luke xii. 49. he says, “ I am come to send
“ FIRE on the earth, and what will I, if it
“ be already kindled ?” In verse 51, he says, “ Suppose ye that I am come to give
“ peace on earth ? I tell you, nay, but rather division. For from henceforth there
“ shall be five in one house divided, three
“ against two, and two against three. The
“ father shall be divided against the son, and
“ the

“ the son against the father: the mother
 “ against the daughter, and the daughter
 “ against the mother: the mother-in-law
 “ against her daughter-in-law, and the
 “ daughter-in-law against her mother-in-
 “ law.” Now, what can these words of
 Jesus mean but this? You, says he, speak-
 ing to his disciples, &c. suppose, according
 to the Prophets, that the Messiah’s kingdom
 is to be a peaceable one, (as they actually did,
 as is clear from several parts of the New
 Testament) consisting of universal peace;
 consequently, you suppose I am come to
 give this peace. But this I tell you plainly,
 you must not expect of me; for I am so far
 from giving peace, that on the contrary, I
 am come to give a *sword, division*, &c. If
 then the Author of Christianity came not to
 promote, “ peace on earth, and good will
 “ towards men.” an heavenly host of an-
 gels, at his birth, proclaimed a lie to deceive
 a few ignorant shepherds. (Luke ii. 14.)
 “ If, (as a Christian author observes *) he
 “ came to promote dissention, fire, and the
 “ sword, of which the world had enough
 “ before, he himself had deceived many,

* Observations on the four Gospels, page 55.

by declarations to the contrary. Ambition had, before this, sufficiently corrupted and thinned mankind: but to deluge all the world with the blood of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives and children, under pretence of kindness for their souls; was a crime unknown, and reserved, it seems, for the impious followers of that God, whom they proclaimed the God of peace. Had the devil himself schemed a religion to deceive mankind; he could not have inserted a more pernicious tenet. These horrid scenes, painted by a faithful hand, must plant a dagger in the heart of humanity. This plainly shows, that such doctrine could not be inculcated by the Messiah; the characteristic of whose kingdom, was to be universal love and peace.

The eighth condition is, that the nations will all repair to the Messiah, in order to submit to his authority, and be instructed by him; agreeable to what the Prophet says, (verse 10th,) "And it shall come to pass in that day, the root of Jesse shall stand* for an ensign to the people; to him shall the nations seek, and his rest shall be glorious."

* Or, Which standeth.

Here the Prophet informs us, that the nations will all seek the Messiah; in order to submit to his government, and instruction: according to what the Prophet hath declared elsewhere of the Messiah, * * * Until he hath firmly seated judgement in the earth; and the distant nations shall earnestly wait for his law. But the Prophet therefore observes, that his rest shall be glorious; that is, according to the idiom of the Hebrew, his Rest will be his glory: i. e. his glory will not proceed from his being a warrior, and performing great feats in battle, as is the case of other kings; but in consequence of the rest and peace which the world will enjoy in his days; so that properly speaking, his quiet, and peaceable disposition; and which will be diffused over all the world, will be the cause of his glory. But, as this condition, hath never yet been accomplished; either at their return from Babylon, or during the continuance of the second temple; nor yet in the person of Jesus, according to the account we have of him, in the New Testament; it is manifest, that the person here spoken of by the Prophet, as

without his instruction and aid. R 2 the

the promised Messiah, has not yet made his appearance.

For, I cannot help observing, that the words of the Prophet, are very remarkable; and form such a contrast in the character of the Messiah, to that which is recorded in the New Testament of Jesus, as proves, beyond all dispute, that he could not be the person here predicted: for the words of the Prophet, are clear, and decisive, TO HIM SHALL THE NATIONS SEEK, &c. Thus, it is plain, that the nations are to seek him; not he the nations, by his going about teaching, and preaching, and sending out twelve apostles; and commanding them to go, and “preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” But which hath never yet been accomplished. No! Nothing of this, is mentioned by the Prophet: and in truth, there will be no necessity for it; as by virtue of the true knowledge of the LORD, which will then be diffused over the whole earth, as above mentioned, they will all be so fully informed of the person and character of the Messiah, that in consequence thereof they, of their own accord, will all seek him, his protection, and instruction; without

without the least necessity on his part, of seeking after them : and which, I am confident, is such an exalted character of the Messiah, as no one that has ever yet appeared, can justly lay claim to ; consequently, this prophecy, in all its force, remains to be fulfilled in the person of the true Messiah.

The ninth condition, which is to characterize the Messiah, is, that he will gather the outcasts of Israel, and collect the dispersed of Judah, from the four extremities of the earth : whom he will form into one kingdom, and reign over, (and which perfectly coincides with what the Prophet Ezekiel says, Chap. xxxvii. verse 21st to 24th. as will be shewn at large, when we come to treat of that Prophecy). And therefore, the Prophet says, verse 11th. “ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall again put forth his hand the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the isles of the sea. And he shall lift up a signal to the nations, and he shall gather the outcasts of Israel, and the dispersed
of

of Judah will be collect, from the four extremities of the earth. And the jealousy of Ephraim shall cease, and the enmity of Judah shall be no more: Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah: and Judah shall not be at enmity with Ephraim. But they shall invade * the borders of the Philistines westward; together shall they spoil the children of the east: on Edom and Moab they shall lay their hand; and the children of Ammon shall obey them."

On this passage, it is necessary to observe, First, that the Prophet calls the future Redemption, the *second time*, in respect to the Redemption from Egypt: for their return from Babylon, was not a perfect redemption, but only a slight visitation, as I have already observed in my answer to Dr. Priestley's First Letters to the Jews, page 41, &c. But the future Redemption will be entirely conformable to that of Egypt in every respect: more especially, by their perfect conformity with each other in the five following particulars: and which, so eminently distinguish the Redemption from Egypt, from the return from Babylon.

* Heb. Fly upon.

The

The first is, that at the Redemption from Egypt, the whole nation was redeemed; so that not one remained: but at their return from Babylon, all the twelve tribes did not return, save only a few that went up from Babylon, as mentioned page 40.

Second, At their Redemption from Egypt, they were delivered from the most cruel bondage, to the enjoyment of absolute freedom: but this was not the case at their return from Babylon; as they remained in almost continual subjection, either to the Persians, Greeks, or Romans, as mentioned page 41.

Third, When they went forth from Egypt, they attained the highest spiritual felicity, by having the ark of the covenant, the spirit of prophecy, the Urim and Thumim, and the fire from heaven, bestowed upon them: but in the second temple, all these things were wanting, as mentioned page 42. See also my answer to Dr. Priestley's first Letters to the Jews, page 46, &c.

Fourth, at their Redemption from Egypt, a number of great and stupendous miracles were wrought amongst them; but on their return from Babylon, and during the continuance

nuance of the second temple, there was no such thing: according to what the Prophet says, "We see not our signs," &c. Psalm, lxxiv. 9.

Fifth, When they were brought out of Egypt, and had kings, (except Saul) they were of the tribe of Judah, as David and Solomon, and their posterity. But during the second temple, there was no king of the tribe of Judah, or the house of David, as mentioned page 75, 76.

All which, is a manifest proof, that the return from Babylon, had not the least semblance, to the Redemption from Egypt. But the future Redemption by the Messiah, will fully resemble it in every instance: for then, all the tribes will be gathered together; and they will be entirely free from subjection; the spirit of prophecy, and the holy things, will be restored to them; miracles will again be performed amongst them: and one from the posterity of David, and the root of Jesse, will reign over them. And, as the future Redemption, will thus strictly resemble that of Egypt, the Prophet very justly calls it, the second time: and which, is also a manifest proof, that the Redemption here spoken

ken of is not a spiritual Redemption, as several Christian writers pretend; for as the Prophet says, that the LORD shall again put forth his hand a *second time* to recover the remnant of his people, &c. it is plain, that those only who had been already once before redeemed by God, could be the subject of the prophecy: and who are they, but the temporal Israel, who have been carried into captivity, and are at this present time, dispersed into the four extremities of the earth; and not the spiritual Israel, as Christians are pleased to call themselves.

And, here, I must once for all, observe that, *all* the Prophecies which speak of the coming of the Messiah, the restoration and redemption of the nation, are to be understood, in the most plain, obvious, and literal sense, and not in a spiritual and mystical sense, as the generality of Christians attempt to explain them. For can any thing be more absurd, than to explain the Prophecies which foretell the calamity which is to befall them, in a literal sense; and those which speak of their future felicity, in a spiritual and mystical sense; surely not. And it is not a little pleasant, to observe, the great

VOL. I S kindness

kindness of Christians towards us in this respect: for they are extremely ready and willing to grant us the entire, and undisturbed possession of all the evils foretold us; which indeed, we have fully experienced for upwards of seventeen hundred years; whilst they, with equal generosity, apply to themselves, all the glorious promises, which, with equal certainty, predict our future happiness in the latter days. This, is kind indeed! and for which, I am sorry to say, our nation in general, and myself in particular, are not quite so thankful, as perhaps might be expected of us: for Truth, divine Truth! steps in, and prevents our acceptance of these applications, by teaching us, that as all the prophecies of our future Restoration, are so clear, and so generally accompany, or allude to, our past and present misfortunes; it is morally impossible to apply them to any other persons, but such as have suffered the misfortunes so foretold. This, is also clearly proved from the words of the Prophet Jeremiah, as mentioned page 66.

But, as there are several Christian writers, who, although they acknowledge that the Prophecies concerning the Messiah, are

to be understood in their most literal and obvious sense, and that of course, the good they promise is temporal; yet, nevertheless, contend, that these glorious promises are to be fulfilled at the second coming of Jesus, when he is to reign a thousand years on earth with the saints: I must observe, that for this, they have no authority from the prophecies of the Old Testament. Nay, I am confident, they cannot produce one single, clear, unequivocal prophecy from the Old Testament, which foretells a two-fold coming of one and the same person as the Messiah; and that, too, at the distance of such a number of years as have already elapsed from the supposed period of his being on earth: whence it is manifest, that the whole scheme of the Millenium, is a mere chimera, an *ignis fatuus*; notwithstanding all the noise and pother that has been made about it.

According to what I learn from a Christian writer of great note*, it was only hatched, in order to bring over the Jews to embrace Christianity: for he observes, "A

* Balnage's History of the Jews, Chap. xxxiv. Sect. 14, page 751.

“ great man has fancied, that the best expe-
 “ dient was, to flatter their hopes. To be
 “ always telling the Jews* of a Messiah
 “ that is come, and was crucified by their
 “ fathers, is cruelly to upbraid them, and
 “ cast them into despair. People seldom
 “ will attend to a harsh and unwelcome
 “ truth, and the mind that has nothing to
 “ hope is easily discouraged. It is a more
 “ sure and acceptable method, to tell them
 “ of the second coming of the son of God,
 “ than of the first, because that which is
 “ past, has afforded them nothing but misery
 “ and shame. The second must be glorious,
 “ and procure wonderful prosperity to the
 “ church. The Jews must have their share
 “ in it as well as we ; why then should they
 “ not be flattered with so pleasing an expect-
 “ tation, and so agreeable to their preju-
 “ dices ? Under this view it has been at-
 “ tempted to demonstrate, by the explication
 “ of the Prophecies, that the second coming
 “ of the Messiah is at hand. There are only
 “ thirty-five years to come of the 1260

* De Messie duplici adventu Diss-ctæ contra Judæos,
 1701.

“ mentioned

“ mentioned by *Daniel**; and if we reckon
 “ lunar years, after the manner of the Chal-
 “ deans, as *Daniel* did, who lived in this
 “ country, this event must be accomplished
 “ in the year 1716.”

He farther observes, “ This method ap-
 “ pears so much the more necessary, as that
 “ without it the Prophecies of the Old Tes-
 “ tament are imagined to be false and delu-
 “ sive. Let them tell us, in short, says a fa-
 “ mous Author†. What are the blessings
 “ the Jewish nation have received from the
 “ Messiah. For near two thousand years
 “ this miserable nation has been scattered
 “ over the earth. It is the off-scouring, the
 “ curse, the refuse of the world; and it
 “ groans under a long and cruel captivity.
 “ So that this will happen; the day of judge-
 “ ment will come, and the Jews will perish
 “ in their miseries! If this be so, certainly
 “ all the prophecies are delusions. The
 “ Holy Spirit has deceived this nation; all
 “ the oracles are false, and God has fed
 “ them with vain hopes; for it would be

* So much for the Christians fallacious calculation of the
 1260 days; and which is in perfect union with their expli-
 cation of the seventy weeks.

† Jurieu's Prophecies, Tom. II. page 205, 206, 207.

“ mocking

“ mocking God and ourselves to say, That
“ these promises were accomplished in that
“ small number of Jews that were converted
“ to Christianity: Jewish Christians,
“ such wretched Christians, that they have
“ only served to found a miserable heresy
“ and sect, which they call *Ebionites* and
“ *Nazarenes*. It will be said, doubtless,
“ That the Jews shall find these great promises
“ accomplished, by their return and
“ recall at the end of the world. And indeed,
“ it is one of the doctrines of true
“ Christianity, that the Jews shall be recalled.
“ It is promised in a thousand prophecies,
“ some of which we have quoted; the miraculous
“ manner of God’s preserving this nation, in my
“ mind is an invincible proof of it. For, in
“ fine, it is an unprecedented and incomprehensible
“ thing, that God, for two thousand years,
“ should preserve this people dispersed
“ among the other nations, without learning
“ their manners, their religions and customs,
“ as is usual with all dispersed people. This
“ clearly demonstrates, that God preserves them
“ for some great design. But pray, supposing
“ this, that the Jews shall
“ be

“ be converted immediately after the end of
 “ the world comes, and they shall neither
 “ possess in themselves, nor in their poste-
 “ rity, the glorious advantages that are pro-
 “ mised them, how shall they see the effect
 “ and accomplishment of so many Prophe-
 “ cies : Behold innumerable millions of Jew-
 “ ish souls, that have been lost in the space
 “ of seventeen hundred years ; a small num-
 “ ber only of this people shall be saved in
 “ the last years of the world. In the name
 “ of God, is this sufficient to fill up the
 “ great ideas that are raised in them by the
 “ mighty promises to their nation ? More-
 “ over, it must be observed, that the Mes-
 “ siah belongs to the Jews ; that he was
 “ promised to the Jews ; that this nation,
 “ from its infancy, has been fed with the
 “ hopes of this Messiah’s coming, as of an
 “ happiness, so great as could not be ex-
 “ pressed, or described, Behold him come,
 “ and this nation, instead of the accom-
 “ plishment of these great promises, sees its
 “ temple burnt, its capital city razed, its
 “ worship abolished, its children dispersed
 “ over all the universe, and made the exe-
 “ cration and contempt of mankind. And
 “ so

“ so this Messiah, the glory of the nation,
 “ brings them nothing but shame and con-
 “ fusion, and infinite miseries, such as have
 “ no example in all the rest of the world.
 “ For all their recompence, some thousand
 “ Jews shall be found at the end of the
 “ world, who shall be converted, and shall
 “ not be damned. I must own, that I un-
 “ derstand nothing of the conduct of God
 “ and his oracles, if this be so. A time
 “ then must come, which shall be the reign
 “ of the Messiah and the Jews, in which,
 “ this nation shall be exalted, as has been
 “ promised above all the nations, and it
 “ shall reign by its saints, its Prophets and
 “ Apostles. For otherwise, I am bold to
 “ say, That all the prophecies made to this
 “ people were delusive, and were only given
 “ them for a snare.”

Such, then, is the scheme of the Milleni-
 um, on which I shall only observe, that it
 fully establishes my position, viz. that the
 prophecies which foretell our good, are all
 temporal, as were those which denounced
 our punishment; and of course belong to one
 and the same people: for they acknowledge,
 First, That otherwise the prophecies of
 the

the Old Testament, would be false and delusive.

Second, That we have received no benefit from the Messiah, said to be already come.

Third, That these prophecies were not accomplished by the Jewish converts to Christianity, in the time of Jesus and the apostles ; for their number was so small and insignificant, that as the author abovementioned justly observes, they only served to found a miserable heresy, and which fully confirms what I have observed in my second Letters to Dr. Priestley, on the little effect which the mission of Jesus wrought on the Jewish nation in general : and, as they freely acknowledge,

Fourth, That the Messiah belongs to the Jews, it must astonish every impartial, candid, and liberal mind, when it considers, how inefficacious his appearance was to them. For it is clear from all History, that he was so far from being endued with the power of bestowing on them the good they had just reason to expect from the Prophecies of the Old Testament, by accomplishing the great promises made to them ; that they on the contrary a few years after, ac-

according to the prediction of Daniel, saw their temple burnt, their chief city destroyed, and their country laid waste, &c. so that it is plain, he brought them nothing but misery and shame, and which is a demonstration that he could not be the Messiah. Of this, a number of Christian writers being fully convinced, formed the ridiculous scheme of the Millenium, in order to sooth the Jews, and win them to Christianity, by holding out the glorious condition of the second advent of Jesus; but for which, as I have already observed, there is not the least foundation in the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Second, That God will redeem the whole nation, as already mentioned: for by the outcasts of Israel, he meant the ten tribes called the kingdom of Israel, who were all cast out together to one place, and did not return to the second temple, as did those of Judah and Benjamin, whom he calls the dispersed of Judah; because, they are dispersed in the four extremities of the earth: all these, without exception, the Prophet observes, the LORD will collect and gather together. He also informs us of the strict union of the nation, which is then to take place;

place; so that there will be no more jealousy, or enmity amongst them, as there was heretofore, on account of the division of the kingdom: for it was that which was the cause of jealousy on the one part, and enmity on the other: but as they will all be united and formed into one kingdom under one Prince*, their jealousy and enmity will cease of course; and being thus united, will invade the borders of the Philistines, spoil the children of the east, and finally subdue Edom, Moab, and Ammon: for these are properly the Kenite, Kenizzite, and Kadmonite, which were promised to Abraham, but whose country the children of Israel did not inherit, when they came out of Egypt, as mentioned in the prophecy of Balaam; but which they will possess at the coming of the Messiah: and which is a manifest proof that this condition has never yet been accomplished: for the nation, has never since the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam, been thus united, nor have they possessed the land of Edom, Ammon, and Moab, as shewn at large page 25.

That this condition remains to be fulfilled,

* Ezek. xxvii. 22.

is acknowledged by some of the most eminent learned Christian divines: and Doctor Lowth, Bishop of London, in particular, in his notes to his New Translation of Isaiah, observes, on verse 11—16, of chapter xi. “ This part of the chapter contains a prophecy, which certainly remains yet to be accomplished. See Lowth on the place.” From all which, it is manifest, that this condition was not accomplished by Jesus; and who therefore, of course, could not be the person predicted by the Prophet in this chapter, by the appellation of *a rod that was to spring from the stem of Jesse, and the cion from his roots that was to become fruitful*: and which plainly shews the fallacy of the Bishop’s scheme, and that of Christians in general; for as they all apply this chapter to the Messiah, and at the same time are fully sensible that it was not fulfilled in the person of Jesus; they, of necessity, are obliged to have recourse to the spiritualizing scheme; and as the Bishop expresses himself, denotes, “ a display of the spiritual deliverance of God’s people by the Messiah.” And which he founds, (as I suppose all other Christians do) on the authority of St. Paul, Romans

Romans xv. 2.* But the absurdity of this scheme of spiritual deliverance, I trust, hath been so clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated, by what I have above advanced concerning the temporal blessings of the Messiah, as to render any farther discussion of the subject superfluous. I cannot however, by any means, omit taking notice of the words of the Prophet; I mean the expression, “In that day.” For, if there is any meaning in language, *in that day*, certainly means, at that time; i. e. the time of the Messiah, as is allowed on all hands: and as they acknowledge that this very part of the chapter contains a prophecy that remains to be accomplished; it is clear, that it was not fulfilled in the person of Jesus; of course, it is manifest, even by their own confession, that

* Although this very citation of Paul’s from Isaiah, on the authority of which, the Bishop seems to found his scheme, is not agreeable either to the Hebrew, the present English version, or even the Bishop’s new translation, but only to that of the LXX. which plainly shews that but little reliance ought to be placed on it. I shall not at present however, enlarge on this subject; because I apprehend, that many of the quotations of the Apostles from the Old Testament, (in some of which, they have been rather unlucky) will naturally come under review in the second part of this work.

he

he could not be the promised Messiah, foretold in this chapter by the prophet Isaiah.

The tenth condition is, that at the coming of the Messiah, the Supreme Being will by his means work a miracle, exactly resembling the division of the Red Sea by Moses : as in verse 15th. “ And the LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea : and he shall shake his hand over the river with his vehement wind ; and he shall strike it into seven streams, and make them pass over dry shod. And there shall be an high-way for the remnant of his people, which shall remain from Assyria ; as it was unto Israel, in the day when he came up from the land of Egypt.” The prophet here informs us of two important events that are to take place at the coming of the Messiah, and the restoration of the Jews. First, that God would utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea : This is a very opposite and descriptive expression for such a river as the Nile ; the destruction of which, will be a great punishment to the Egyptians, as the fertility of Egypt depends upon its overflow. Second, by the expression he shall shake his hand over the river, is meant the river Euphrates ; so
that

that it will be divided into seven streams, forming seven paths or high-ways for those that remain from Assyria, in the same manner, as the children of Israel went through the Red Sea, when they came out of Egypt. And the reason that the Prophet makes mention of Assyria only, without taking notice of any of the other kingdoms or nations, where they have been carried captive, is, that in this passage, he speaks particularly of the return of the ten tribes, who were carried away by Assyria, and placed in Halah †, and Habor, &c. beyond the Euphrates. And therefore, God will divide that river, that on their return they may pass over dry shod. But this miracle it must be acknowledged, hath at no time whatever yet taken place; not at their return from the Babylonish captivity, for nothing like it came to pass at that time; neither was any thing of the kind ever effected by Jesus: so that it is manifest, he could not be the person by whom, or in whose time, this miracle was to be accomplished.

The Prophet then observes, that at the time of the restoration and salvation, Israel

† See 2 Kings xvii. 6.

will

will offer thanks unto the LORD. Chap. xii. 1. "And in that day thou shalt say, I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD; for though thou hast been angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou hast comforted me." For according to the length of the captivity, (says the nation) I might have thought that my hope was cut off; and mine enemies actually told me so: therefore, now that thou hast redeemed me, I will give thanks, and praise thy name; for though thou hast been angry with me, yet is thine anger now turned away, and thou hast comforted me. And though when the nation came out of Egypt, they were in fear of the pursuit of the Egyptians: the Prophet observes that, at the future redemption, this will not be the case, but on the contrary, they will say, "Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and will not be afraid." And as Moses and the children of Israel, in their song at the Red Sea, said, "The LORD is my strength, and my song," &c. the Prophet informs us that at the future redemption, Israel will also say, "For the LORD is my strength and my song: and he is become my salvation." For as the future redemption is called the second time, in
regard

regard to that of Egypt, as it is to resemble it in every degree, (as already mentioned) it is fit that they should sing the same song, which they sung at their departure and deliverance from thence. And as the children of Israel at their redemption from Egypt, received the Law, the Prophet observes, "And ye shall draw water with joy from the fountains of salvation." That is, ye will not then receive a new Law, as when ye came forth from Egypt, but ye shall draw water from the fountains of salvation: ye will be fully instructed in the law which ye have, by the Prophets, and other virtuous persons, who are the fountains of salvation; as Jonathan aptly explains it, מבוֹרֵי צְדִיקִים *From the chosen righteous.* The Prophet then in verse 4th. proceeds by way of advice, to command those who return from captivity, to chant the same psalm, as was composed by David for the purpose of bringing up of the ark* of God, saying, in that day ye shall say, "O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name; make known his mighty deeds among the people†." He then gives us the reason why

* Sam. vi. &c.

† Psal. cv. 1, &c.

we ought to sing that song, because ye ought to, "Record, how highly his name is exalted." How highly his name was exalted by the mouth of the Prophets when they brought up the ark of God: and as ye will also now have the ark and the divine presence among you, it is proper that ye, "Sing the LORD: for he has wrought a stupendous work: this is made manifest in all the earth." For by reason of the general redemption that will then take place, it will be made known in all the earth, as above mentioned, chap. ii. verse 2d. "And all nations shall flow unto it." So that it will be publickly known throughout the earth by all nations. He then proceeds verse 6th. "Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitants of Zion; for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel." By which, he informs us, that the nation of the Jews, will have greater cause to rejoice and exult, than the rest of the nations, although they will all be brought to the true knowledge of JEHOVAH; because his divine presence will dwell in the midst of them; so that then we may truly say, the glory of the latter

ter house will be greater than that of the former.

Thus, have I explained this great and important prophecy, by shewing the ten conditions that are to characterize the person of the Messiah, and the time of his appearance: and which, I presume, have been clearly and satisfactorily proved never yet to have been accomplished: of course, it is manifest, that they must of necessity be accomplished at the coming of the true Messiah.

The third Prophecy is contained in the eighteenth chapter.

Before I enter upon the explanation of this prophecy, it is necessary to enquire what connection it has with the preceding one: as that contains, the burden of Damascus; and which, I suppose, led Bishop Lowth to observe, in his notes on this chapter, that "This is one of the most obscure prophecies in the whole book of Isaiah. The subject of it, the end and design of it, the people to whom it is addressed, the history to which it belongs, the person who sends the messengers, and the nation to whom the messengers are sent; are all obscure and doubtful." But if we duly consider the lan-

guage of the prophecy; its idiom and phraseology, so as to be capable of entering into the true spirit of it, we shall easily be able to understand the real purport, end, and design of the prophecy; as also the connection it has with the preceding one.

That it is connected with the preceding prophecy, will appear very plain, if we attend to verse 14th of chapter xvii. "At the season of evening, behold terror! before morning, he is no more! This is the portion of those that spoil us; and the lot of those that plunder us." Now, as the Prophet has in this verse forcibly depicted the destruction of Sennacherib and his numerous host, it is very properly connected with that under consideration, because Cush, and all the country beyond the rivers of Cush, were antiently, as the learned Abarbanal observes, part of the empire of Sennacherib: the Prophet therefore, by this connection informs us, that the destruction of Sennacherib will be so well known in the world to the remotest period of time, that when the Redemption of the Jews shall take place, and those nations hear of their salvation, they will instantly send ambassadors to them
in

in ships, in order to court their favour, and enter into friendship with them, dreading, lest it should happen to them, as it did to Sennacherib. This being premised, we shall proceed to the explanation of the Prophecy itself.

“Ho! to the land shadowing *with** wings, beyond the rivers of Cush: which sendeth ambassadors on the sea; and in vessels of reeds†, on the face of the waters. Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled: to a people terrible from that day forward; a nation strong in faith, though trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled.” The prophecy now begins to unfold itself to us: for here, we have an account of those who send the messengers, and

* The reason that the Prophet calls it the land shadowing with wings, appears to me, to be either on account of the great number of trees which grew on the banks of the great rivers there, as Abarbanal observes; and thus also the vessels of reeds or canes which answer to the Indian canoes, &c. Or as Jonathan explains it in his paraphrase ארעא דאתן לה בספינן מוארע רחיקא וקלעיהון פריסן כנשרא דשאם כנפיה דמעבר לנהרי הודו. A country unto which they come in ships from a distant land, and their sails are spread as the eagle that flieth with its wings, which is on the other side of the rivers of India.

† Or Canes.

the

the nation to whom the messengers are sent; and indeed, a more perfect description of any thing cannot be given, than is this of the Jewish nation: for what nation hath been so scattered and peeled as the Jews, whose land hath been spoiled by the rivers? a beautiful figure to denote the different Monarchies which at different times have had dominion over them and their country: but who are to become terrible from the coming of the Messiah; for the proper sense of מן היום according to the idiom of the Hebrew, where the ellipsis is so frequently obliged to be supplied, is, as if written מיום ההוא *from that day*: i. e. the time of the Messiah: for by reason of the great and stupendous miracles that will be wrought in their favour; their restoration after so many hundred years of degradation and persecution; their glory and exaltation; they will become terrible to all other nations; agreeable to what Moses says, "And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of thee." Deut. xxviii. 10. And the Prophet still farther describes the praise of the nation, by saying, "A nation strong in faith, though, trodden

trodden down; whose land the rivers have spoiled.

Notwithstanding all the persecutions they have suffered, and the different conquerors to whom they and their land have been subject, they yet nevertheless, always stedfastly hoped for the salvation of the LORD: and I am confident, that a stronger picture of the constancy of the nation, for which they are almost proverbial, and are therefore called by Christians, blind, and obstinate, cannot be drawn; for notwithstanding they have been imposed upon by several impostors, or false Messiahs, and have on that account suffered the most dreadful persecutions and massacres, yet, have they never swerved from the hope of seeing the LORD's salvation, i. e. the coming of the true Messiah: for which reason, they are also very properly called, "Prisoners of hope." (Zech. ix. 12.) Because, in the captivity, they are as prisoners who continually hope to be released. All which, is a manifest proof of the truth of the explanation here given: for I am clearly of opinion that קוֹ קוֹ here used by the Prophet, is derived from the verb קוֹ to hope: and is used in the same sense as, ויקו לעשות עובדים
And

And he hoped, that it should bring forth grapes. (Isai. v. 2.) Or, ויקו למשפט And he looked for judgement. (Ibid. vii.) This sense, is perfectly consistent with the context; a nation strong in faith, &c. as above shewn.

The Prophet than proceeds, verse 3d. "Yea, all ye that inhabit the world, and that dwell on the earth, when the standard is lifted up on the mountains, behold! and when the trumpet is sounded, hear!" The Prophet here informs us, that this movement, (the end and purport of which, we are made acquainted with in verse 7th) will not be beyond the rivers of Cush only; but will also take place in all parts of the world, when the LORD shall lift up his standard, and cause his trumpet to be heard; and which perfectly coincides with what the Prophet says, chap. ii. verse 2d. and 3d. "And it shall come to pass in the latter days," &c. And with what the Prophet Zephaniah says, "For I will then turn the people* to a pure language †, that they shall all of them call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Cush, Atharee, and the daughter of Put-

* Heb. Peoples.

† Heb, Lip,

see shall bring mine offering." Whence also, it is manifest, that what the Prophet says here concerning the land shadowing *with* wings, and in verse 7th. "At that time, &c." is the self same event as that prophesied of by Zephaniah; and that the offering that is to be brought, is the same in both places: viz. the nation of the Jews from all the places where they have been scattered.

Before we proceed, it will be necessary for the better illustration of the prophecy under consideration, to enquire, what the Prophet meant by the standard and trumpet, which is to be seen and heard all over the world: for it is not to be supposed that this can be understood in a literal sense: because, it is scarcely credible that such an event can ever take place, viz. that a standard should be lifted up, and a trumpet sounded, that should be seen and heard in every part of the globe. And which I suppose, led Bishop Lowth to remark on this passage, "I take God to be the agent in this verse; and that by the Standard and the Trumpet are meant the meteors, the thunder, the lightning, the storm, the earthquake, and tempest, by which Senacherib's army shall be destroyed.

(Lowth's notes on *Isaiah*). But nothing can be farther from the true sense of the Prophet's meaning. And as a late writer* observes on this note of the Bishop's, "But it is more probable that the verse hath no relation to those circumstances." This indeed, is the real state of the matter, and that not of this verse only, but of the whole chapter: for great part of his translation, and the whole of the comment on this prophecy, is wild, distorted, unconnected, and disjointed, on account of its supposed obscurity; at the same time that the sense of the pure Hebrew is wrested (to accommodate it to his system) to the Chaldee and Syriac: so that a real Hebraist, perfectly acquainted with the idiom and phraseology of the prophetic language, who is able to enter into the true spirit of the prophecy, can scarcely forbear smiling, to see what pains hath been taken, to render that unintelligible, that in itself is not so: as may be clearly perceived, by a due attention to the explanation here given: and according to which, the real sense of the prophecy, denotes the

* A new Translation of *Isaiah*, with supplementary notes to those of Dr. Lowth, by a Layman.

resurrection of the dead, which is to take place at the coming of the Messiah: for that is the standard that is to be seen, and the trumpet that is to be heard: for by the sight of those who rise, and the report which they will make of the truth of Revelation, and the Unity of God, &c. all mankind will be brought to the true knowledge of the LORD. And, as the resurrection will be universal, in all parts of the globe, the Prophet says, "All ye that inhabit the world, and that dwell on the earth," &c. He then speaks of his own resurrection, by observing, "For thus hath the LORD said unto me, I shall be at rest, and look towards my habitation:" For by the expression *to me*, the Prophet meant himself: as it properly denotes the same, as concerning me. And here the Prophet informs us, God had told him, that he should die and be at rest from the turbulence and violence of this world; for death is, properly speaking, true rest; and therefore Job, speaking of death, said, "For now I should have lain still, and been quiet." (Job, iii. 13.) But that after his death, he should look towards his habitation; that is, his body: for the body is the habitation of the

soul on earth, to which he will look, in hopes of a reunion at the time of the resurrection : but this union, he informs us, will not be as the natural union of the soul and body in infants, who are obliged to be reared, and taught, &c. but that it will be “ Like the clear heat after rain, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.” For when the sun is clear and pure after a gentle rain, its effects are highly beneficial to the vegetable world : by which he acquaints us, that the body, which is the patient, will be in as fit a state to receive the soul, which is the agent, as the earth after a gentle rain, is to receive the pure heat of the meridian sun, and with equal benefit. By this metaphor, he has given us to understand, that man will then rise in a perfect state. As the Prophet in another place, (Isai. xxvi. 19.) compares the resurrection to dew, he here observes, “ Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.” And as the distillation of the dew must be very beneficial, and highly acceptable in that warm season of the year, so will the resurrection be (but in an infinitely greater degree) to mankind in general : and by which figure, he also seems to allude to the mode of the resurrection.

It

It is also worthy of remark, that as the Prophet Isaiah has compared the Resurrection to the heat of the sun, &c. so hath the Prophet Malachi, in speaking of the Resurrection, and the day of Judgement, said, "For behold, the day cometh, which shall burn as a furnace, &c. But unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Which sun of righteousness, is to consume the wicked, and bring salvation to the just. He then informs us, when this stupendous miracle of the Resurrection, is to take place, in these words, "For before the harvest, when the bud is perfecting, and the blossom is becoming a swelling grape." Before the end and destruction of the world, while the Jewish nation, whom he prefigures by the bud, is yet in captivity, and before their destruction can be perfected by their enemies and persecutors, the reward of the righteous will appear; which he aptly describes, by the blossom becoming a swelling, (or more properly, ripening) grape: for the participle נִמְלֵךְ is derived from the Radix נָמַל, *to reward*: so that the real meaning of the expression is, that before the nation shall be swallowed up,

up, the reward will bloom forth for the righteous of the nation : but as for the wicked, and those who were their enemies and persecutors, he observes, “ He shall cut off the shoots with pruning hooks, and the branches he shall cut down, and cast away. They shall be left together to the rapacious birds of the mountains, and to the *wild* beasts of the earth ; and the rapacious birds shall abhor it ; and every wild beast of the earth shall despise it.”

By this figure, is represented the entire destruction of the wicked, both high and low, rich and poor : so that their power and government will be totally annihilated : and they be left to the rapacious birds and beasts, who will also loath them : so that they will be cast abroad upon the face of the earth : agreeable to what this Prophet hath declared elsewhere *, “ And they shall go forth and shall see, the carcases of the men, who rebelled against me : for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched ; and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.” Thus, will all the birds and beasts on account of the extraordinary stench and corruption fly from, and loath them. So that they will

* Chap. lxvi. ver. 24.

remain upon the earth as a standing monument of God's justice and vengeance for their enormous crimes.

And, as the resurrection will take place at, or near the restoration of the nation, the Prophet says, "At that time shall a gift be brought to the LORD of Hosts." For this refers to the Land shadowing *with* wings mentioned verse 1st. for it is from thence that the present is to be brought: and he farther informs us, what the present is, that is to be brought, "A nation scattered and peeled; and of a nation terrible from that day forward; a nation strong in faith, though trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled: to the place of the name of the LORD of Hosts, to Mount Zion." For it is there, that the glory of the Lord of Hosts will be manifested; as the Prophet says, (Chap. ii. ver. 2d, and 5th.) O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD." And as he hath said elsewhere, "And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations, for an oblation to the LORD." (Chap. lxvi. ver. 20th).

This explanation of the Prophecy, at once removes all the obscurity, and other difficulties

ties which Bishop Lowth imagined he found in it; so that the whole, appears regular and connected, not only with itself, but also with the three last verses of the preceding chapter, which contains a description of the invasion, and the sudden overthrow of Senacherib, as I have above shewn, and which the Bishop himself acknowledges: for in his notes on these three verses, he observes, "The last verses of this chapter seem to have no relation to the foregoing prophecy, to which they are joined." It is a beautiful piece, standing by itself; for neither has it any connection with what follows: whether it stands in its right place, or not, I cannot say. It is a noble description of the formidable invasion, and of the sudden overthrow of Senacherib: which is intimated in the strongest terms and the most expressive images; exactly suitable to the event."

From the words of the Bishop here quoted, it is clear, that he acknowledges, that these verses, describe the invasion and overthrow of Senecharib; and which is all the use I intended to make of it; for if this is allowed, their connection with the prophecy under consideration, will appear natural and unaffected:

unaffected: and will fully establish the truth of my position beyond dispute. I cannot however, help observing, that by this confession, the Bishop confutes his own hypothesis: for if these verses have no connection with what follows, (as he observes) how in the name of goodness, can he apply the prophecy under consideration to the Egyptians? more especially, as in his notes on verses 3d. 4th. and 7th. he observes that the standard and trumpet denote the meteor, the thunder, the lightning, &c. by which Senacherib's army shall be destroyed. And that the gift is, from the Egyptians to Hezekiah, because they were very nearly interested in the miraculous deliverance of that kingdom by the destruction of the Assyrian army. To me, and I trust to every candid and impartial mind, it must appear truly inexplicable.

I have now only to observe, that, according to my explication, it is manifest, that the end and purport of the prophecy, has never yet been fulfilled, either at their return from the Babylonish captivity, or at the coming of Jesus: for history does not inform us, that at any time such an universal resurrection took place: much less that

in consequence thereof, the children of Israel were brought from beyond the rivers of Cush to the place of the name of the LORD of Hosts, to mount Zion, as a gift or present. Whence it is clear, that the prophecy remains still to be accomplished at the coming of the true Messiah.

The fourth Prophecy commences at verse 16th. chap. xxivth. and is continued to verse 6th of chap. xxvi. in which, the Prophet meant to inform us first, of the restoration of the nation: and by the manner which he ushers it in, seems, as if he said, I see it, but not now; I view it, but it is not near; "From the uttermost parts of the earth." Towards the end of the world, in the latter days, the nations will say, "We have heard songs, Glory to the righteous." To the righteous nation, and the true Messiah. But if ye ask me, (says he) when this will be, I cannot tell ye; For I say, "It is a secret with me: it is a secret with me;" agreeable to what Moses said, (Deut. xxxvi. 34.) and as was said to Daniel, (xii. 9.) But, (proceeds the Prophet) this I will inform you of, that before the redemption and salvation will take place, great trouble and afflictions

afflictions will befall the nation; for, first, "Wo is me, the plunderers plunder," Meaning those who destroyed the nation, and the land of promise: but these will again be destroyed by others, as was the case of the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans; and therefore, he observes, "Yea, the plunderers, in succession, continue their cruel depredations." And he farther informs us, secondly, that those who were any ways instrumental in the destruction of the nation, will all receive their due reward, as he says, verse 17th. "The terror, the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the land: And it shall be, that whoso fleeth from terror, he shall fall into the pit; and whoso escapeth from the pit, he shall be taken in the snare." And all this (he observes) will be, by the immediate interposition of Divine Providence. "For the flood gates from on high are opened; and the foundations of the earth tremble. The land is grievously broken; the land is utterly shattered to pieces; the land is violently moved out of her place; the land reeleth to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a lodge for a night; for her

iniquity lieth heavy upon her ; and she shall fall, and rise no more." The Prophet, in these verses, points to the destruction of the four monarchies : for by the land being grievously broken, the Babylonian empire is typified : and by its being utterly shattered to pieces, the Persian empire is delineated : and by its being violently moved out of its place, the Grecian empire is denoted : and by the land reeling to and fro, &c. the Roman empire is depicted : and whose iniquity is so heavy, that she is doomed to fall, and rise no more. He also informs us, thirdly, that at the time of the Redemption, " God will summon on high the host that is on high ; and on earth the kings of the earth : And they shall be gathered together, who are bound in the pit, and closely imprisoned in prison : and after many days they shall be visited. And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun shall be ashamed : for the LORD of hosts shall reign, on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem : and before his antients shall be glory." By the sublime figurative language in these verses, the Prophet informs us of, the great and extraordinary revolution that is to take place in the world at the restoration

restoration of the Jews, who are now as prisoners bound in the prison of captivity : and who are to be visited, after many days, and gathered together : when all false worship, whether of the heavenly bodies, heroes, or dead men, is wholly to cease ; because the LORD alone will be King over all the earth ; agreeable to what the Prophet says elsewhere*, “ And the pride of man shall bow down, and the height of mortals shall be humbled ; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day : and the idols shall totally disappear, when they shall all go into caverns,” &c. But, before his antients shall be glory ; that is, the antients of his people Israel, and not the antients of any other people.

The Prophet, having thus prophesied the future restoration of the nation, the punishment of their enemies, and the total subversion of all false worship, breaks out in rapturous exclamation, “ O LORD ! thou art my God : I will exalt thee : I will praise thy name : for thou hast effected wonderful things ; counsels of old time, promises immutably true.” In this verse, the Prophet

* Isai. ii. 17, 18.

praises God for the accomplishment of the prophecies foretold by the prophets; and which he emphatically calls, "counsels of old time," because it is a long, long time, since they have been delivered; but nevertheless, they are "Promises immutably true." He then descends to the particulars contained in those prophecies. The first of which is, the punishment of the enemies of the Jews as in verse 2d. "For thou hast made the city an heap; the strong fortified citadel, a ruin: the palace of the proud ones, that it shall be no more a city; that it shall never be built up again." And, as those which remain of the nations will by those things be brought to the true faith, he observes, verse 3d. "Therefore shall the fierce people glorify thee; the city of the formidable nations shall fear thee." Those who have been so fierce and cruel to the nation, will then glorify and praise the LORD; for they will then not only see the accomplishment of their own punishment, as foretold, but will also find, that the preservation of the Jewish nation, during so long and dreadful a captivity, was fully verified, as predicted by the Prophets. "For thou hast been a defence
to

to the needy in his distress : a refuge from the storm ; a shadow from the heat : when the blast of the formidable rages like a winter storm." In this verse, the Prophet shews, that notwithstanding all the furious rage of the most powerful nations was directed against this people, yet, God shielded and protected them in such an extraordinary manner, that they were not able, by any means whatever, to destroy them, although they earnestly sought it : but for which, God would nevertheless punish them severely ; as he says, verses 5th and 6th. " As the heat in a parched land, the tumult of the proud shalt thou bring low ; as the heat by a thick cloud, the triumph of the formidable shall be humbled. For the LORD God of Hosts shall make, for all the people*, in this mountain, a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees : of delicacies exquisitely rich, of wines on the lees perfectly refined." The Prophet here informs us, that the punishment of the nations will be on the holy mountain, agreeable to what the Prophet Obadiah says†, " For as ye have drunken upon my holy mountain, all the nations

* Heb. Peoples.

† Obad. i. 16.

round shall drink." And that God will give them such strong rich wine to drink, that they will be perfectly drunk and stupified; and which denotes their total destruction.

He then says, verse 7th. "And this mountain shall he destroy, the covering, that covered the face of all the people* ; and the veil that was spread over all the nations." By the covering and the veil, he clearly points to the erroneous doctrines and opinions, which have been maintained and inculcated by the different nations, in opposition to the true word of God: and which operated as a covering or veil, and prevented their seeing the light of truth. But this covering will be destroyed; for (as I have already observed) by the restoration of the nation, &c. they will all be brought to the knowledge of the one true God.

He then proceeds to inform us of the happiness of the nation, at their restoration. "And he will utterly destroy death for ever." That is, all violent death; such as the nation had suffered from their enemies during this long and dreadful captivity: and thereby, "The LORD God will wipe away

* Heb. Peoples.

the tear off from all faces ; and the reproach of his people shall he remove from off the whole earth ; for the LORD hath spoken it.” For on the restoration of the nation, the reproach cast upon them by Christians, &c. that the LORD had cast them off, and made choice of the Gentiles, instead of them, will be entirely removed : and the consequence of this great and glorious change will be, that, “ In that day, the nation will say : Behold, this is our God ; we have trusted in him, and he hath saved us : this is JEHOVAH : we have trusted in him ; we will rejoice, and triumph in his salvation.” This is our God : our living and ever existing God, in whom we trusted, in spite of the numerous dreadful afflictions heaped upon us by our enemies for our constancy ; but we still persevered : we trusted in his great name ; and he hath not deceived us ; for he hath saved us, and caused us to rejoice in his salvation. He then continues his description of the punishment of the nations, and the salvation of Israel. “ For the hand of the LORD shall rest upon this mountain : and Moab shall be threshed in his place, as the straw is threshed for the dunghill. And he shall

stretch out his hands in the midst thereof, as he that swimmeth, stretcheth out his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride with the sudden gripe of his hands; And the bulwark of thy high walls shall he lay low: he shall bring them down to the ground; he shall lay them in the dust." In this manner, the Prophet shews the dreadful destruction that is to come on the nations in the latter days; for it is not only Moab that is to be thus destroyed, but also all those who oppressed the nation; but the Prophet mentions Moab, as being one of those, of whose great pride he had already spoken*; and who was also one of the nations that were to be finally subdued by the Jews in the days of the Messiah: and therefore, having shewn their utter destruction, he, in chapter xxvith. informs us, that the very reverse will be the case of the Jews at that time: for, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; God will establish salvation for *its* walls and bulwarks; Open ye the gates, and let the righteous nation, constant in the truth, enter. Thou shalt preserve, in perpetual peace, those

* Chap. xvi. 6.

whose mind is stayed on thee, because they have trusted in thee." And as the Prophet in these words, has shewn that their future happiness will in a great measure be owing to their trust and confidence in Divine Providence; he admonishes them to be careful to continue stedfast in that conduct, and to put their sole trust in God, by saying, "Trust ye in the LORD for ever; for in the LORD is never-failing protection." For, "He hath humbled those that dwell on high; the lofty city, he hath brought down: he hath brought her down to the ground: he hath levelled her with the dust. The foot shall trample upon her: the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy." For God will not only punish all those who persecuted his chosen people, but will also subject them to them: and which is what the Prophet means by saying, that the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy, shall trample upon the proud city, &c. for the Jewish nation, it is acknowledged on all hands, is well known by that appellation, as being the outcasts upon earth, not having any country of their own. From all which, I presume, it is manifest, that the promises contained in this

Prophecy, viz. the restoration and happiness of the nation, after a long series of misfortunes; and the punishment of their enemies, hath never been fulfilled by Jesus; of course, he could not be the Messiah as foretold by the Prophets, who was to accomplish these things.

Before I quit this Prophecy, I have one observation to make; which is, that Bishop Lowth, in his notes on the xxvth chapter of Isaiah, observes, "It doth not appear to me, that this chapter hath any close and particular connexion with the chapter immediately preceding, taken separately and by itself. The subject of that was the desolation of the land of Israel and Judah, by the just judgment of God, for the wickedness and disobedience of the people: which taken by itself, seems not, with any propriety, to introduce a hymn of thanksgiving to God for his mercies to his people in delivering them from their enemies." But this remark of the Bishop's, plainly shews that, he did not understand the prophecy, neither was he able to enter into the spirit of the language of the Prophet: for, according to the real sense of it, as here explained, there

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is a very close and particular connexion between the latter part of the xxivth chapter, and the xxvth. For what can be more natural, than for the Prophet to introduce a hymn of thanksgiving to God, for the restoration of his people, and the punishment of their enemies. Indeed, nothing could be introduced with greater propriety, than such an hymn, which praises God for the accomplishment of Prophecies delivered so many centuries back, that he very justly calls them, "counsels of old time." No wonder then, when he, in a prophetic vision, saw the accomplishment of these prophecies, he should break out in rapturous praise to God for the same. This, I think, is so manifest, that any thing more said in support of it, would appear entirely superfluous.

The fifth Prophecy, commences verse 7th of chapter xxvi. and is continued to the last verse of the xxviiith chapter: in which he treats of the Resurrection, and future restoration, &c. of the nation.

It must be observed, that the Prophet having, in the preceding prophecy, foretold the future restoration of the nation, &c. began

gan now to exhibit his complaint to the Supreme Being, and as it were, to enter into a contest with him, in behalf of those of the nation, who died during their long captivity, especially those who were massacred, and destroyed by fire and sword, for the sake of his holy name; because, he had not communicated any thing particular to him, concerning them. He therefore begins his complaint thus: "The way of the righteous is perfectly strait." It is proper that the righteous should act with perfect rectitude: and as, "Thou most exactly weighest the path of the righteous." For the just weight and balance is the LORD's, in order to weigh the path of rectitude. And, as this is thy constant method of proceeding, it is proper, that the ways of thy judgments should be strictly just: and therefore, (as he says, verse 8th,) "Also, in the way of thy judgments, have we hoped, O LORD! *for* in thy name, and in thy memorial, is the desire of our soul." For as thou weighest the actions of the righteous in a just balance, we earnestly hoped to see the justice and rectitude of thine actions: and that, for the love and veneration which we have for thy name, and thy

thy memorial, which is that of strict justice.

He then proceeds, as speaking in his own person, "With my soul have I desired thee in the night : yea, with my inmost spirit in the morn have I sought thee." All night long have I pondered on this ; and in the morning, when the imagination is free, and the brain is not clouded with the vapours of meat, I attentively considered it.

He then shews the utility and benefit of this investigation, "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness." Having thus expressed himself in this prefatory manner, he now proceeds to state the principle of the complaint itself, as follows, "Though mercy be shewn to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness : in the very land of rectitude he will deal unjustly ; and will not regard the majesty of the LORD." For notwithstanding that thou art merciful and gracious to the wicked, yet do they not attribute their success to thee, but say, By the strength of my hand have I done it*. And therefore, "LORD, *when* thy hand is lifted up, they

* *Isai. x. 13.*

will

will not see :” They will not acknowledge thy power : it therefore is not just that they should be thus favoured : “ *But* cause them to see with confusion, thy zeal for thy people : yea, the fire shall burn up thine adversaries.” And, although, all the Prophets prophesied concerning the future restoration of the nation, yet, was the Prophet, not satisfied with this, and for which, he states his reasons in the following verses. “ LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us : for *even* all our *great* works hast thou wrought for us.” I know, O LORD ! that thou wilt certainly restore the nation, by means of the Messiah ; for all which hath happened to us in our captivity, hath been by thine appointment, and not by chance, or accident, as the wicked say : and therefore, as all the calamities ordained by thee to come upon us, have been fully accomplished ; I cannot entertain the least doubt of the accomplishment of the good which thou hast promised us. But still, I have a great objection to make, and that is, “ O LORD, our God ! other lords besides thee, have had dominion over us.” The kings and rulers of the Gentile nations, who have so cruelly persecuted and
destroyed

destroyed us. But, notwithstanding that we have suffered innumerable afflictions, and misery beyond measure, during this long and dreadful captivity; yet, have we not forsaken the name of our God, nor spread forth our hands to a strange god: and which he forcibly expresses, by saying, "But thee, and thy name only, do we mention." We invoke none but thee; and constantly, and firmly acknowledge thy UNITY, in opposition to every other doctrine: and, as we have thus strictly adhered to thee, and thy name: what wilt thou do for those righteous and pious persons, who have been put to death, and suffered martyrdom for the sake of thy holy name, during this long and cruel captivity; so that they and their offspring have all been cut off from the land of the living? Of what benefit, therefore, will the future restoration of the nation, be to them *? Seeing they are dead, and of course have not experienced any of its blessings, as he observes, (verse 14th.) "They are dead, they cannot live; they are deceased, they cannot

* See page 132, &c. where this objection is stated at large by a Christian, who, I suppose, founded it on this expression of the Prophet, "They are dead," &c.

rise: Because thou hast visited, and destroyed them: and all memorial of them hast thou abolished." Thus, says the Prophet, hast thou acted by thy chosen people! whilst, on the contrary, thou hast been kind and bountiful to the wicked and idolatrous nations: but this hath not redounded to thy glory, as would the salvation of the nation: as he says, verse 15th. "Thou hast encreased the Gentile nation, O LORD; thou hast encreased the nation: but art thou glorified? though thou hast extended the borders of their land." This verse, perfectly agrees with verse 10th, and both tend to shew, that the nations do not ascribe their power, extent of dominion, commerce, &c. to the immediate providence of God, but to their own sagacity, wisdom, industry, &c. so that God is really not glorified by their prosperity, as the Prophet observes. But as this charge might appear to be an heinous crime, as it seemed to arraign the conduct of the Supreme Being; the Prophet, endeavours to exculpate himself therefrom, by shewing, that all which he had advanced, was only to apologize for, and vindicate the conduct of the nation during the captivity; as may be plainly

plainly perceived by the explanation of verses 16, 17, and 18. "O LORD, in affliction have they sought thee; their humble supplication was poured out, when thy chastisement was upon them." The sense of which is, as if the Prophet had said, O LORD, our God, thy people were in great distress when they sought thee, and their humble supplication was offered when they were in deep distress, because thy chastisement was upon them; but yet, this was not a murmuring and repining, the consequence of want of faith, and reliance on thy promises; a defection of their love to thee, or a denial of thy Divinity: but only, "As a woman, that hath conceived, when her delivery approacheth, is in anguish, crieth out aloud in her travail: thus have we been before thee, O LORD." By this image, the Prophet, has most elegantly, and emphatically, painted the real state of the nation: for as the travailing woman at the time of child-birth, crieth aloud, because of the pain and anguish that she is in, and yet, hath not the least animosity towards her husband, who, as we may say, she considers as the cause of all her pain. Just so, is it with

the complaint of the nation : for although, the dreadful calamities and afflictions with which they are overwhelmed, cause them to cry aloud, and utter their complaint, yet, have they never swerved from their love and allegiance to God, or entertained the least doubt of the accomplishment of those glorious promises delivered to them by the Prophets in his name : notwithstanding all that has been said, and written by Christians, Deists, &c. to weaken their faith in them ; by telling them, that they have a veil before their eyes ; are a blind, obstinate, ignorant, and superstitious people : that they do not understand the true intent and meaning of these glorious promises ; for that they have been long since accomplished, in the person whom they had so scornfully rejected, and inhumanely treated : that God had therefore utterly cast them off, and made choice of the Gentiles, &c. &c. But all these pompous, sophistical, and delusive arguments, have not had any effect on them, or been able in the least to move them ; and therefore, the Prophet, very justly calls them, a nation strong in faith, as already observed, page 150, &c. The Prophet farther observes, that, although
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the resemblance is thus strong between the nation, and the woman in travail, yet, is there still a great and wide distinction between them: because, the woman, on delivery, quickly forgets her pains, as she thinks herself fully recompensed, by the joy and delight of embracing her dear offspring; but this is not the case with us; for, "We have conceived: we have been in anguish; we have as it were brought forth wind: salvation is not wrought in the land; neither are the inhabitants of the world fallen." Notwithstanding that our pain, trouble, and affliction hath been exceedingly great, yet, have we received no consolation: for salvation hath not been wrought in the land of promise, for our redemption; neither have our enemies been punished, for the great cruelties exercised towards us during this long and dreadful captivity.

The Prophet, having thus exhibited his complaint, immediately received a most benign and consolatory answer, "Thy dead men shall live; my deceased, they shall rise." The case, says God, is not as you have conceived, and represented: for you imagine, that, as they are dead, they never will see the

LORD'S

LORD's salvation. No, says he, it is not for: for. Thy dead men shall live: that is, those of thy people, who have died a natural death: My deceased; they shall rise: that is, those who have suffered death for my sake; who were cruelly put to death for a strict adherence to me; shall all of them arise, and live: and therefore he says, "Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." For they are not only to be brought to life, which the Prophet calls awaking, but are to sing, and shout for joy, on account of beholding the salvation and redemption of the nation. But, as it is extremely difficult, for man to form an idea of, or comprehend the nature of the Resurrection, on account of the separation, and conversion of matter and substance, (as will be seen presently by the Philosophical objections made to it) the Prophet, by a most beautiful image, informs us, how it is to be effected, "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." For as the dew lights on the earth, and fertilizes it, so will the soul light on the original STAMEN, and reanimate it.

Before I proceed, I deem it necessary to take notice of two things: first, to shew the falsity

falsity of what Christians in general maintain, viz. that the Jews were unacquainted with the doctrine of the Resurrection, till they learned it from Christ's followers; and which I suppose to be the reason, that induced Dr. Lowth, late Bishop of London, to consider this prophecy, not as a prophecy foretelling a future resurrection; but as, "Images used to represent the deliverance of the people of God, from a state of the lowest depression*:" For, if he had allowed that, this, and other like prophecies†, denoted a promise of a future resurrection, he would have been obliged to have relinquished one of the most important points, that Christians so strongly contend for, viz. Christ's being the first teacher of the doctrine of a future resurrection. But, as that would have been so highly repugnant to the system of Christianity; he, of course, was obliged to explain it as above. But his explanation is extremely fallacious, and carries its own confutation with it; because it is necessary that, an image used to express or represent any thing by way of allegory or metaphor, in the Prophetical writings,

* Notes on Isaiah, page 144. † Ezek. Of the dry bones.

should

should be an image commonly well known and understood, otherwise it would, by no means, answer the purpose for which it was assumed. And this, the Bishop himself acknowledges: for in his notes on Isaiah, chap. xxvi. he observes, "It appears from hence, that the doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead, was at that time a popular and common doctrine: for an image which is assumed, in order to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophetical, must be an image commonly known and understood, otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed." Whence it is manifest, that the Jews were certainly well acquainted with the doctrine of the Resurrection in the days of Isaiah, who lived almost eight hundred years before the incarnation: it must therefore, of course, have been taught some time before, in order to be well known or understood: so that it is clear, Jesus could not have first taught, what was well known for almost a thousand years before he was upon the earth. Nay, I am confident that the doctrine of the Resurrection was taught by Moses himself, as I have already shewn in
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in the Dissertation on his second prophecy, (page 54, 64, &c.) which, thence was so popular, and well known in the nation, that even the women were acquainted with it, as in 1 Samuel, chap. ii. verse 6th. where we find Hannah, in her song, praising God, and saying, "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." From all which, it is plain, that Jesus cannot in the least lay claim to the character of having first taught the doctrine of the Resurrection, seeing, it had been taught and well known, so long before his time.

The second thing I mean to take notice of, is to enquire, what the end and purpose is, that is to be effected by this great and stupendous miracle; and to endeavour to give a solution to the objections that are raised against the doctrine of the Resurrection; that is, of the soul with the same identical body: for I must freely acknowledge, that if the soul does not reanimate the same identical body, it cannot be called a Resurrection; but on the contrary, is properly a creation, or transmigration; but, as this is contrary to what we are taught by the Prophet, I

think, it requisite to remove those Philosophical objections which seem to represent the Resurrection as impossible: though, if we reflect that, it will be a supernatural act; and at the same time consider what infinite power can effect, it will easily be perceived that their objections cannot impair it. We cannot properly contradict what we do not understand: nor pronounce that impossible, which we do not comprehend, or which does not imply a direct and absolute contradiction. But, as the race of modern Philosophers, (i. e. Deists, Freethinkers, &c.) will not believe any thing, but what they see, and have certain, and positive knowledge of; and yet, frequently assert, what they neither know, nor are able to explain, thereby misleading ignorant and unwary youth; it is highly necessary to apply an antidote to their poison, by shewing what little force there is in their objections. It must be allowed, that it is easier to start difficulties, than to solve them: but as these philosophers, think themselves wiser, and better instructed than the rest of mankind, I shall take the advice of Solomon, who observes, (Proverbs, chapter xxvi. verse 5th.) “ Answer

“swer a fool according to his folly, lest he
 “be wise in his own sight.” That is, lest
 they presume on our silence, and think their
 arguments unanswerable, than which, there
 cannot be any thing more dangerous : I shall
 therefore state, what to me appears to be the
 true end and purpose of the Resurrection,
 including an answer to the objections raised
 against it : in illustration of which, shall lay
 down the following principles.

I. That the doctrine of the Resurrection
 of the dead is clearly taught by the different
 Prophets: and to shew that, it is not a trans-
 migration, but a real resurrection of the soul
 with the same body, they are represented as
sleeping ; for thus saith Isaiah, “Thy dead
 men shall live, my deceased* shall arise :
 awake and sing, ye that sleep in the dust of
 the earth.” Thus also the Angel said to
 Daniel†, “And many of them that sleep
 in the dust of the earth shall awake.” They
 are therefore described as sleeping, to shew
 us, that we are not to consider them as dead,
 and past vivification, but only as sleeping in

* And some explain, נבלתי *My dead body*: and which,
 the Prophet spoke of himself, to denote his faith in the
 doctrine of the Resurrection.

† Dan. xii. 2.

their graves. And, as during sleep, there is a suspension of the mental faculties, but which is removed on waking: even so, will those who sleep in the dust, awake, and be restored to life; as the Prophet says, "For thus hath the LORD said unto me, I shall be at rest, and look towards my habitation." By which image, the Prophet informs us, that, after he should die, and be at rest from the turbulence of this world, he would still look towards his body in hopes of a reunion with it, as shewn at large in pages 155, 156.

II. *Of the Form and Manner of the Resurrection.*

There have been many objections made to the nature of the Resurrection, as it is impossible, that the body can again exist, after having been corrupted, dissolved, and dispersed. Thus the Philosophers argue*. The same piece of matter, or substance, may happen to be a part of two or more bodies. Thus a fish, feeding on a man, and another man afterwards feeding on the fish, part of the body of the first man

* Chambers's Cyclopaedia. Article—Resurrection.

becomes

becomes first incorporated with the fish; and afterwards, in the fish, with the last man. Again, instances have been known of one man's feeding immediately on another: and, among the cannibals of the West Indies, the practice is frequent.

Now, say they, where the substance of one is thus converted into the substance of another, each cannot arise with his whole body: and to which shall the common part be allotted? To this, some answer, that, as all matter is not fit, or disposed to be assimilated to the body, and incorporated with it, human flesh may very probably be of this kind; and therefore, what is thus eaten, may be again excreted, and carried off. But that which appears to me to be the more solid answer, is, what I understand from the words of the Prophet, "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs." For as the dew lights on the herbs, and causes them to vegetate, (as above observed) so will that, which God will appoint at the Resurrection, light on the original stamen, and animate it: and this original stamen, may very properly be called the same body; as it is supposed to be so minute, as not to be separated or torn asunder,

afunder, and united with the stamen of any other man.—This agrees with Mr. Leibnitz's answer to the objection; for he observes, "All that is essential to the body, is the original stamen which existed in the semen of the father: nay, and on the footing of the modern theory of generation, which existed in the semen of the first man. This we may conceive as the most minute speck or point, imaginable; and therefore, not to be separated, or torn afunder, and any part of it united with the stamen of any other man.—All this bulk we see in the body, is only an accretion to this original stamen; an addition of foreign matter, of new juices, to the primary, solid stamen. There, is, therefore, no reciprocation of the proper matter of the human body."

III. *Of the State and Condition in which the Dead are to rise.*

This, leads, to the second objection, which is this,—The human body, we know by the late discoveries, in the animal œconomy, is continually changing; a man has not entirely the same body to day, as he had yesterday; and it is even computed,

computed, that, in less than seven years time, his whole body undergoes a change, and not a particle of the same body remains.—Which of those many bodies, then, which the same person has in the course of his life, is it that shall rise? or does all the matter that has ever belonged to him rise again? or does only some particular system thereof? The body, *e. gr.* he had, at twenty, at thirty, or at sixty years old? If only this or that body arise, how shall it be rewarded or punished for what was done by the other? with what justice does one person suffer, &c. for another?

To this it may be answered, on Mr. Lock's principles, that personal identity, or the sameness of a rational being, consists in self-consciousness; in the power of considering itself the same thing in different times and places.—By this, every one is to himself what he calls *self*; without considering whether that self be continued in the same or divers substances. So far reaches the identity of that same person. It is the same self now it was then; and it was by the same self which now reflects on an action, that action was performed.

Now,

Now, it is this personal identity that is the object of rewards and punishments, which we have observed may exist in different successions of matter; so that to render the rewards and punishments just and pertinent, nothing needs, but that we rise again with such a body, as that we retain the consciousness of our past actions.

This objection, though not in precisely the same words, has been started by Abarbanal, in order to confute it: for he observes*,—In what state and condition, are the dead to rise? For, as the human body, suffers a continual change daily, according to the nutriment which it receives, &c. and, in particular, the change from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, and old age; it is requisite that we enquire, in what state, or condition, they are to rise; whether in youth, or manhood? To which he answers,---That they are to rise in exactly the same state and condition they were in when they died: nay, even with their very defects: as, for instance, if they were lame, deformed, &c. And this, is extremely proper, in order that they may be known to be

* Preface to Isaiah.

the same identical persons; and which will plainly be perceived to be the more necessary, when we come to consider,

IV. *The End and Purpose to be effected by the Resurrection.*

It must be allowed, that in every action, the cause ought to be proportionate to the effect. Now, if this be necessary in respect to common, or natural causes; it is surely much more so, that those which are supernatural, should be every way commensurate to the effect, they are designed to produce: it is therefore, highly proper, that we seek an adequate cause for this stupendous miracle; and seriously enquire,---Why the soul, after being separated from the body, and within the pale of heavenly bliss, should be obliged to enter it again?---To this, some* answer, that the end of the Resurrection is, that the body and soul of which man is compounded, may receive, either the reward, or punishment, due to him for his good, or evil deeds. But the futility of this is evident: for as the learned Abarbanal observes, the future re-

* R. Saadiah, Nachmanides, &c. &c. Which also seems to be the opinion of Christian writers in general.

ward, or punishment, is for the soul only, not for the body. And, if it was necessary for both body and soul to receive the reward, or punishment; they might have received it in this world, and there would then be no necessity for this miracle: He therefore, is of opinion, that there are two great ends to be effected by the Resurrection: the one particular, and the other general. That which is particular, is for the Jews; and the other, which is general, is for them, and all the other nations. The first great end, which I call a particular one, as it is for the Jewish nation only, is to effect, what I have above mentioned, viz. that those who have been persecuted and slain, during this long and dreadful captivity, for adhering to the true faith, may enjoy the salvation of the LORD, according to what the Prophet says, verse 19th, "Thy dead men shall live," &c. And as he says elsewhere*, "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and exult on her account, all ye that love her: be exceedingly joyful with her, all ye that mourn over her, &c. And ye shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice: and your bones shall flourish like the green herb: And

* Isai. lxvi, 10, &c. &c.

the hand of the LORD shall be manifested to his servants," &c. From all which, it is clear, that those who mourned for Jerusalem, during this long captivity, are the same that are to rejoice with her at the restoration, which the Prophet tells them they are to see: but this would be impossible, unless by means of the Resurrection; which he, by a most beautiful figure, calls, the flourishing of their bones as a green herb; and which is to be effected by the hand of the LORD being manifested to his servants, by this great and stupendous miracle, which men at present cannot comprehend, on account of its magnitude.

The second great end, which I call a general one, because it affects all mankind, whether Jews, Gentiles, or Christians; who are all interested in the great end that is to be effected by this miracle, as I shall presently shew.—It is well known, that the world was early sunk into the most gross and stupid idolatry: that there was but one nation on earth, that handed down the doctrine of the DIVINE UNITY: which nation hath been long in captivity, dispersed throughout the earth; during which time,

different religions and sects have started up: whilst they, for their firm adherence to this great truth, have been so cruelly persecuted, that it is one of the most singular wonders of Providence, that they now exist as a nation. And, as it was the intent of the Supreme Being, that all men should thus acknowledge him; it is not to be supposed, that his intention can be frustrated: he therefore, according to his consummate wisdom, will shew all mankind the way wherein they are to walk, and the work that they are to do: so that sins may cease in the earth, and the idols be entirely cut off: that they may all know and understand that the kingdom is the LORD's, and that he only is the supreme governor of the nations: that the firm belief of his UNITY may be so unalterably fixed in their hearts, as that they may attain the end for which they were created, to honour and glorify God, as the Prophet observes*; not to fill the world with the most enormous crimes, as they have done.—This great, this important, this glorious end, is to be effected by means of the Resurrection: for when mankind shall see

* Isa. xliii. 7.

the dead arise, in the different parts of the globe; consisting of the most distinguished Personages that have lived on earth: the most eminently righteous men: the ancient Patriarchs, Prophets, and other eminent persons: some of the most distinguished Heathen Princes, Philosophers, and Lawgivers; together with some of the most eminently wicked Princes and Tyrants; as likewise those who shall recently have left the world.

—When all these shall arise, and with one voice, unanimously testify and declare, that the LORD God is ONE, and his name is also one: when the Gentiles shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit†: and that, on the contrary, the Law of Moses, is the only true Revelation.—I say, when men will thus see the wonderful work of God; and hear all those who shall arise, declare the immortal bliss that is prepared, as a reward for the righteous; the punishment and torments prepared for the wicked: and explain to them the nature of true worship, to the One true God; the falsity, and vanity of every other doctrine: the hearts of man-

† Jerem. xvi. 19.

kind will naturally be highly affected, by what they see and hear of those who arise: and being thus fully convinced of the truth; (for it is impossible, that any should be able to withstand such evidence as this:) the consequence will be, that they all will forsake their idols, and false doctrines; sincerely acknowledge the LORD, and no more follow vanity; but all will worship the One true God, according to what the Prophet says, (chap. ii. ver. 2d.) “And it shall come to pass in the latter days; the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established on the top of the mountains, &c. And all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and shall say; Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD; to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways: and we will walk in his paths,” &c. Thus also, (chap. xxv. ver. 7th.) “And this mountain shall he destroy, the covering that covered the face of all the people: and the veil that was spread over all the nations.” Which denote the erroneous doctrines maintained, and inculcated by the different nations, in opposition to the true word of God; operating

rating as a covering, or veil, and preventing their seeing the light of truth, as already observed, page 168. This, is properly, the "Great and terrible day of the LORD," mentioned by several of the Prophets*. This, leads us to,

V. The Punishment which God will inflict on the wicked for their Crimes.

I have just shewn, what is to be the principal end of the Resurrection; and it is such, as I doubt not, will appear to every rational person, one of the most important purposes possible to be effected; as tending to the real happiness of mankind: and therefore, every way worthy of the great Author of our being. But in order to render it perfect, another extraordinary event is also to take place, which, in its nature, will greatly contribute towards perfecting mankind in the knowledge of the One true God; and wean them from all false worship; namely, the punishment of the wicked, who will arise at the Resurrection: for when mankind shall see the exemplary corporeal punishment inflicted upon them for their idolatry, supersti-

* Joel iii. 4. Zephan. i. 14. and Malach. iii. 23.

tion,

tion, &c. and that they, publicly, and in the presence of all men, will acknowledge the justness of the sentence passed upon them, by the great and all-wise Judge; the whole world will be fully convinced of the dreadful consequence of the sin they have committed: and having, at the same time, a just conception of the existence and attributes of the Deity, they will, of course, abstain from all false worship, and serve him only, in sincerity and truth.

The Prophets, therefore, very justly call it, "The great and terrible day of the LORD:" for it will be terrible to the wicked, on account of the dreadful punishment they will receive: and great, and important, in the reformation that it will effect, as being the means of bringing all men to the knowledge of the true faith.

That the punishment of the wicked, at the Resurrection, is to be corporeal; is plain from the words of the Prophet, (Isai. lxvii. 24.) "And they shall go forth and shall see, the carcases of the men, who rebelled against me; for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched: and they shall

shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." And this very punishment, which they will receive, will be the cause of what is mentioned in the preceding verse, that all flesh will come to worship before the LORD. Thus, have I shewn that, the punishment of the wicked, or reward of the righteous, as to body and soul together, is not the principal end of the Resurrection; but only as accessory towards the great end of bringing mankind to the knowledge of the One true God. Neither did the Prophet mean to instruct us in any such thing; for the true reward of a future state, is for the soul only, being purely spiritual: and therefore, God said to Moses, "No man can see me and live." (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) No man can behold the divine essence, while clothed in the garment of flesh. But, when the soul is freed from matter, and no longer clogged with it, it will eternally enjoy divine glory in the presence of the Supreme Being, and contemplate his divine essence; which it cannot taste, while united to the body.

To return. The Prophet having informed the nation of the Resurrection, acquaints us, that it would be at a great distance of

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time, in the latter days ; and therefore says, verse 20th. “ Come, O my people ; retire into thy chambers ; and shut the doors about thee.” Be patient, and resigned, under oppression, without murmuring at Providence ; and be careful to keep the commandments, for they will shield you ; which is expressed in figurative language : for as the door shields us from robbers, so will the keeping of the precepts, shield them from evil. He then says, “ Hide thyself for a little while, for a moment, until the indignation shall have passed away. For behold, the LORD issueth forth from his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” Here, the Prophet informs us of the punishment of the nations, which is to be effected, by their slaying and destroying each other with fire and sword, in the wars, which God, in his wrath, will move them to wage against one another : and exhorts the nation not to interfere in these quarrels, for that they are caused, by the LORD’s issuing, to punish the nations ; they therefore must not be seen in the tumult ; but retire, and hide themselves, till the indignation be passed : this, seems perfectly conformable to the command

mand of Moses to the Israelites, when the destroying angel was to pass through the land of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 22.) that none should go out of the door of their houses till morning. A strong corroboration this, of what I have advanced, concerning the semblance of the future restoration, with that of Egypt, as mentioned page 126, &c. He then informs us, that in that period, God will thus punish the nations; and the Resurrection will instantly take place, "For the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no longer cover her slain." From the expression here made use of by the Prophet, it is manifest, that he alluded both to those who died a natural death, during this long and dreadful captivity; as well as those, who were cruelly put to death for their adherence to the true faith: for by the earth's disclosing her blood, he meant those that died naturally: and by *her slain*, he alluded to those that were violently put to death: by which, he shewed us that, both one, and the other, should arise. A strong circumstance this, in support of the position laid down above, that the Resurrection has two great and important ends: the one particular for the Jewish

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nation, &c. as mentioned at large, (page 194.)

He then proceeds to inform us farther of the punishment to be inflicted on their great and powerful enemies; (as in verse 1st of chap. xxviii.) "In that day the LORD shall punish with his sword; his well tempered, and great, and strong sword; Leviathan, the rigid serpent; and Leviathan, the winding serpent: and shall slay the monster, that is in the sea." He thus, in allegorical language, informs us of the terrible destruction of the great Potentates, enemies, and persecutors of God's people; by the vengeance which God will take on them. And, although he will thus avenge himself of their enemies and persecutors, yet, will he visit the nation with kindness and mercy; which is shewn by his constant care of his vineyard: the allegory of which, is carried on in direct opposition, to what the Prophet described it in chapter vth. when he used it, to reprove the nation for its wickedness; and a denunciation of the vengeance that was to be brought upon them: as will be shewn as we proceed. "In that day, sing ye unto her a vineyard of red wine." For

as he had before compared her to a vineyard that brought forth wild grapes ; or, more properly, poisonous berries ; he now informs us, that she shall bring forth red wine ; a strong, generous, intoxicating liquor. And, as he had before observed, that on account of the nation's wickedness, the hedge should be removed, and it should be devoured : he now says, " It is I, the LORD, that preserve her : " I have preserved them during the continuance of a long and dreadful captivity : agreeable to what Moses said, (Deut. xxxii. 10.) " He preserved him, as the apple of his eye. " And, as in the days of her wickedness, he said, " I will command the clouds, that they shed no rain upon it. " He now, on the contrary, says, " I will water her every moment ; " I will take care to water it at proper times ; and that gently, and not with heavy showers, for fear of injuring it : as he says, " I will take care of her by night ; and by day I will keep guard over her. "

He then proceeds to state, that even during the captivity, he did not act by them, according to their desert ; for says he, " Fury is not in me : I should have been as thorns

thorns and briers in battle; I should have marched through them; I should have burned them up together." For if he had acted against them with fury, the afflictions brought upon them, would have been so many, and so great, as to have destroyed them at once. But instead of that, he observes, "Or let him, (that is every one of them) take hold of my protection." Let them keep my Law, which is a sure protection; as Moses says, "That thou mayest obey his voice," &c. for he is thy life, &c. (Deut. xxx. 30.) Again, "Ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this Law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life," &c. (Ibid. xxvii. 47.) And therefore, the Prophet observes, that they should take hold of God's protection, that is, keep his law: and thus endeavour to be at peace with him. However, he observes, those that return from captivity, shall greatly rejoice, and will no more commit sin; and in consequence, will not be punished any more; but spend their days in peace and plenty, as in verse 6th. "He shall cause them that come of Jacob, to take root: Israel shall bud forth, and flourish;

flourish; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit." The Prophet then continues to shew the lenity and moderation, with which the severity of God's judgment against them had been tempered: as in verse 7th. "Hath he smitten him, according to the stroke of him who smote him." The meaning of which, according to the original, (to which it is scarcely possible to do justice, in a translation) is, that the stroke with which he struck Israel, was not proportioned to the power of him, who inflicted the stroke; or they would have been totally consumed, and annihilated: but as they have been preserved to this hour, it is manifest, that the infliction was not equal to the power of him who smote them; but was greatly tempered with mercy: this, is properly what the Prophet meant by the expression.

He then adduces another proof of God's lenity towards this people: "Or is he slain according to the slaughter, of those slain by him." The meaning of which is, that Israel was not punished, as were the rest of the nations: for when their measure was full, and God punished them, they were totally destroyed;

destroyed ; so that scarcely any name, or remainder of them was left ; as was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah ; the Canaanites, Babylonians, Persians, &c. &c. But on the contrary, this was not the case with this nation. But, “ In measure, when thou didst send her forth, didst thou debate with her : he stayed his rough tempest, in the day of the east wind.” When their measure was full, and God was resolved to punish them, it was by sending them out of the land of promise, that he debated the matter with them ; not by utterly extirpating them : and therefore, even in the day of the east wind, that is, when his wrath was kindled, and he was inflicting the punishment, he stayed his rough tempest : he tempered it with mercy, and only sent them into captivity. And this very captivity, was not for the purpose of revenge ; but for their benefit ; “ For by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be expiated ;” and this is all the fruit to remove his sin ; when he render all the stones of the altar, like the lime stones scattered abroad : that the groves and images rise no more : Then the strongly fortified city shall be desolate ; an habitation forsaken, and deserted like a wilderness.

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There shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. When her boughs are withered, they shall be broken : women shall come, and set them on fire ; for it is a people void of understanding : wherefore he, that made him, shall not have pity on him ; and he that formed him, shall shew him no favour."

The Prophet here informs us of the great benefit and advantage, which the nation will reap from the captivity : namely, the expiation of all their sins, as I have shewn at large in my explanation of Daniel's famous prophecy of the seventy weeks* : and also farther informs us, that when their sins of idolatry, &c. shall be thus expiated ; so that their redemption will draw near ; the city which is so strongly fortified, (by which he means the strong and powerful states) shall be desolate, utterly forsaken, and deserted like a wilderness : by this, he points out the utter destruction of their enemies. And, as besides the guilt of their persecuting of God's chosen people, they had imbibed, and maintained such erroneous and impious doc-

* See Levi's First Letters to Dr. Priestley, page 47, &c. And his Letters, Part II. to the same, page 80, &c.

trines, as is scarce credible of beings endow-
ed with ratiocination ; (so forcibly expressed
by וכלה סעפיה, which properly denotes,
And he shall destroy her vain or erroneous
imaginations) he calls them a people void of
understanding ; and informs us, that he who
made and formed them, would shew them
neither pity nor favour, but would utterly
destroy them.

Having thus shewn the exemplary punish-
ment of their enemies, he again returns to
speak of their redemption in the following
verses.

“ And it shall come to pass in that day,
the LORD shall beat off from the channel
of the river, (which properly denotes the
river Euphrates, beyond which, the ten tribes
were carried captive) to the stream of Egypt :
and ye shall be gleaned up, one by one, O ye
children of Israel.” By this, he clearly
points out this long and dreadful captivity ;
during which, such numbers of them have
been destroyed by the numberless persecu-
tions and massacres which they have suffered ;
whjch hath been the cause of their being
scattered in all parts, and so few of them re-
maining,

maining*, that, according to the figurative language of the Prophet, the LORD, to find them, will beat for them, as a person threshes the corn out of the hulk; and they will be gathered, one by one; according to what the Prophet Jeremiah says, † “And I will take you one out of a city, and two out of a family, &c.” Which is a manifest proof, that this prophecy was not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity.

He then proceeds to relate other circumstances that are to take place, at the restoration of the nation, as in verse 13. “And it shall come to pass in that day, the great trumpet shall be sounded; and those shall come who were perishing in the land of Assyria, and who were dispersed in the land of Egypt: and they shall bow themselves to the LORD, in the holy mountain in Jerusalem.” This, is what appears to me, according to the language of the Prophet, to be the real and true explanation of this great and important Prophecy; (for nothing can be of greater import, than bringing the

* Thus says Moses, Deut. iv. 27. “And ye shall be left few in number. See also xxviii. 62. † Jerem. iii. 14.

whole world to the knowledge of the One true God, and the true faith) the subject matter of which, plainly and evidently shews, that it hath never yet been fulfilled; neither at their return from Babylon, nor yet by, or in Jesus: of course, it certainly remains to be fulfilled at the coming of the true Messiah, whom God may send speedily, Amen.

The Sixth Prophecy commences verse 1st, chap. xxxiv. and is continued to the end of the last verse of chap. xxxv. The introduction of this prophecy, plainly shews it to be of the highest importance, and of universal concern. "Draw near, O ye nations, and hearken; and attend unto me, O ye people!" This is to inform them, that this prophecy was not concerning Israel and Judah only, as the other prophecies; but concerning all the nations, who had provoked the LORD of Hosts, by persecuting his chosen people; all nations are therefore called upon to attend to the declaration; and to hear the decree which the wrath of God hath denounced against them. Thus he says, "Let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all that spring from it." That they may all know, and understand, that it

is the decree of the most High ; “ For the wrath of the LORD is kindled against all the nations ; and his fury against all their hosts : he hath devoted them ; he hath given them up to slaughter. And their slain shall be cast out ; and from their carcases the stench shall ascend ; and the mountains shall melt down with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved ; and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll : and all their host shall wither ; as the withered leaf falleth from the vine, and as the blighted fruit from the fig tree. For my sword that is in heaven, shall be satiated with blood : Behold, on Edom it shall descend ; and on the people justly devoted by me to destruction. The sword of the LORD is glutted with blood ; it is pampered with fat : with the blood of lambs, and of goats ; with the fat of the reins of rams : for the LORD celebrateth a sacrifice in Botzrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. And the unicorns shall fall down with them : and the bullocks together with their bulls ; and their own land shall be drunken with their blood, and their dust shall be enriched with fat. For it is the day of vengeance to
the

the LORD ; and the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and her dust into sulphur: and her whole land shall become burning pitch. By night or by day it shall not be extinguished; for ever shall her smoke ascend: from generation to generation she shall lie desert; to everlasting ages no one shall pass through her: but the pelican and porcupine shall inherit her; and the owl and the raven shall inhabit there: and he shall stretch over her the line of devastation, and the plummet of emptiness. Her nobles who do not there* proclaim it a kingdom, and all her Princes, shall utterly fail. And in her palaces shall spring up thorns; the nettle and the bramble in her fortresses: and she shall become an habitation for dragons, a court for the daughters of the screech owl. And the jackals and the mountain cats shall meet one another; and the satyr shall call to his fellow: there also the screech owl shall pitch; and shall find for herself a place of rest. There shall the night raven make her nest, and lay her eggs; and she shall hatch them, and gather her young

* Heb. Her nobles, and no kingdom is there proclaimed.
under

under her shadow : there also shall the vultures be gathered together ; every one of them shall join her mate.

By this sublime figurative language ; this high-wrought terrible description ; the Prophet informs us of several circumstances : for in verses 2d. 3d. and 4th. he speaks in general terms of the destruction of the nations ; and in verse 4th. he shews the total ruin of their polity : for in the figurative language of the Prophets, the heavens and the things therein, signify thrones and dignities, and those that enjoy them : the sun * is used to denote the whole species and race of kings, in the kingdoms of the world politic. The dissolution of the heavens, denotes the ruin of the world politic. The sun, the kings ; and the falling of the stars, the degradation of the subordinate princes, and great men. The Prophet therefore, by the expression, “ And all the host of heaven shall waste away,” &c, shews the total destruction of the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the nations, who are to be punished in the latter days.

* Lowth on Isai. xxiv. 21—23. Sir I. Newton's Observations on the Prophecies, Part I. chap. ii.

Having

Having thus spoken in general terms of the punishment of all the nations, who had provoked to anger the defender of the cause of Zion, he, in verse 5th. &c. descends to speak of the particular dreadful destruction of Edom. "For my sword, &c. Behold on Edom it shall descend," &c. And thus proceeds to explain the particulars of their destruction; and that not only of them, but also of those who should come to assist them; "And the unicorns shall fall down with them," &c. By which he means those powerful states, that should come to assist Edom in the war; so that the helper will fall, and the holpen be overthrown; and all of them, be destroyed together. He also informs us, why they are to be thus punished with such dreadful slaughter and bloodshed, "Because it is a day of vengeance to the LORD; and the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion." Here are two causes: the one, the vengeance of the LORD: Because his name hath been so greatly profaned by the nation; and the other, the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion. That is, for what they inflicted on the Jewish nation during this long and dreadful

dreadful captivity. And it is not a little remarkable, that Moses expressed himself in nearly the same language, "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence, at the time that their foot shall slip," &c. So that the truth of this prophecy, is supported in the uniformity of the language, by what Moses said. He farther informs us, that exclusive of the dreadful slaughter, which they are to suffer, the city of Botfrah itself is to be totally destroyed, and become pitch and sulphur, &c. (as was Sodom and Gomorrah) which is not to be extinguished day or night: and this dreadful destruction, is the consequence of the enormous crimes which they have committed: for Botfrah, denotes Rome; which may justly be called the very sink of corruption; the contaminated fountain, from whence flow idolatry, bigotry, and superstition. And, it is well known that, the pernicious doctrines taught at Rome, were the sole cause of the dreadful persecutions, and massacres, which the Jews have suffered among Christians for so many hundred years; it therefore is to be utterly destroyed. That Edom, means the Romans, and that Botfrah denotes Rome, has been shewn at large by Abarbanal

in his comment on this chapter. And it is a received tradition by our sages, and mentioned in the Talmud, Midrashim, &c. and also by Josephus Ben Gorion, that the Romans were descended from the Dukes of Esau, or Edom; namely, Duke Zepho*, whom they called Janus, to whom the month of January was consecrated; and Duke Magdiel; which Basnage† attempts to invalidate from the arguments of the Bishop of Burgos, an apostate Jew. But these arguments of the Bishop, had been before considered by Abarbanal, and completely refuted by him. And if we seriously consider the purport of the prophecy, it will be manifest that, neither the ravages and devastation committed upon the Edomites by Nebuchadnezzar, nor their subjection to the Jews, by Hyrcanus, can be what the Prophet had in view: for those events, as far as we have any account of them in history, seem by no means to come up to the terms of the prophecy, or to justify so high-wrought, and so terrible a description‡. Neither is it easy to discover

* Gen. xxxvi. 15—43.

† History of the Jews, Book III. Chap. vii. Sect. 15.

‡ This is also the opinion of Bishop Lowth. Notes on Isaiah, xxxiv. and xxxv.

what

what connexion the extremely flourishing state of the people of God, described in the next chapter, could have with those events, and how the former could be the consequence of the latter, as it is there described to be. But what appears to me, (and I doubt not to every candid and dispassionate mind) to be conclusive, is, the exact description given of Rome by the Prophet, verse 12th. "Her nobles, who do not there proclaim a kingdom." And can any thing be more particularly described, than is thus Rome, under the name of Botfrah? for by the expression, "Her nobles," it is plain he alluded to the Cardinals, who, properly speaking, are the nobles of Rome, because, they are, as their name implies, the hinge* and government of all the affairs of the Romish church; and by whom, the Pope is elected out of their own number; and who is not called king, but only Bishop of Rome; or, as he styles himself, the Vicar of Christ; and the title given him, is, his Holiness; neither is his territory, denominated a kingdom, but the territory of the Church, or the Holy See, &c. And the reason that Rome is spoken of under the name of Botf-

* Ayliffe's Parergon.

rah, is to represent the extraordinary power, and influence, that it would have over all those that followed the doctrines embraced by Edom: for בצורה *Botfrah*, is derived from בצר. בצורה. *Strong, fortified, &c.* And as in time of war, the people fly to the strong fortified towns for protection; so did all Christendom, repose an entire confidence, in Rome and its Bishop; and fly to him for spiritual protection; for indulgencies, absolutions, &c. He also, (verse 6th.) compares the numerous herds of pampered ecclesiastics, to lambs, goats, and fat rams. And as the revenues of the numerous religious houses, which the Prophet calls her palaces, serve to maintain these drones in idleness, he informs us, that then, “In her palaces shall spring up thorns: the nettle, and the bramble, in her fortresses: and she shall become an habitation for dragons,” &c. All which, I presume, is a manifest proof of the truth of my position, that Botfrah is Rome; and that this prophecy has a view to events still future: to great revolutions to be effected in latter times, at or about the restoration of the nation, as may be perceived from the subject matter of the succeeding chapter.

To

To return. As this prophecy, as I have just observed, points to a very distant time; the Prophet observes, that they should not despair, or doubt the accomplishment of it; as thinking it impossible, according to the flourishing state of the nations in general, or Botfrah in particular; for, "Consult* ye the book of the LORD, and read:" That is, the books that contain the prophecies: for they were all given by one shepherd: all came from God; for which reason, he very properly calls them the book of the LORD: and therefore, "Not one of these shall fail; none shall want her mate:" Not one of the numerous prophecies delivered shall remain unaccomplished: "For the mouth of the LORD†, hath given the command; and his spirit itself hath gathered them." He hath commanded the Prophets to deliver them. "And he hath cast the lot for them:" Hath cast the lot for the wild beast and birds above-mentioned, to dwell in Botfrah: "And his hand hath meted out their portion by the line: they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein."

* Heb. Search.

† Heb. The mouth of him.

The Prophet having foretold the punishment of the nations in general, and of Edom in particular, observes, that the immediate consequence of these events would be, that, "The desert, and the waste place, shall be glad; and the wilderness shall rejoice, and flourish as the rose." By this image, he had a view to the land, and cities of Israel; which, during the captivity, were waste and depopulated; but will then rejoice on being rebuilt, and inhabited, as he observes, verse 2d. "It shall abundantly flourish, and rejoice, even with joy and song: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the beauty of Carmel and of Sharon: these shall behold the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God." Here the Prophet not only informs us of the extremely flourishing temporal state of the nation, but likewise of their exalted spiritual state; for by the glory of Lebanon, &c. is denoted their flourishing temporal state; or that their houses, &c. should be built of the cedar of Lebanon, &c. as in the days of Solomon. And by the expression, These shall behold the glory of the LORD, &c. the return of the Divine Glory, is clearly depicted.

The Prophet having thus prophesied of those great, those important events; addresses himself to the Sages, Elders, and Leaders of the nation, thus: "Strengthen ye the feeble hands, and confirm ye the tottering knees. Say ye to the faint-hearted, Be ye strong; fear ye not; behold your God will come *with* vengeance; *with* the retribution of God: He himself will come and save you." When ye see the dreadful persecutions and massacres which the nations will inflict on the chosen people, for their adherence to the true Unity of God, overwhelming the nation; so that they are ready to sink under them: and those which have not sufficient fortitude to make head against such dreadful misfortunes, are ready to abandon the true faith; as hath actually been the case in Spain, Portugal, &c. as already mentioned in this work. Or those who, by the length of [the captivity, and the pompous sophistical arguments made use of by Christians, and apostates of their own nation, to induce them, to embrace doctrines repugnant to those delivered by God to Moses, may be wavering in their faith, and staggering in their minds. When ye
see

see these things, says the Prophet, ye are to strengthen the feeble hands, and confirm the tottering knees. Ye are to instruct them in the truth; and teach them not to despair; but manfully to bear up against these misfortunes: and that they may depend upon it, from the word of God, the truth and verity of prophecy, that, notwithstanding the great length of time that hath elapsed since the commencement of their captivity, and the numerous afflictions which they have suffered, yet, may they rest assured, that their God, will at last come, and avenge their sufferings; and that he himself will redeem them: and, “Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened; and the ears of the deaf, be unstopped. Then shall the lame bound like the heart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

In this figurative language, the Prophet, in a most masterly manner, has drawn an exact picture of the state of the nation during this dreadful captivity; for on account of the great troubles they have undergone, they may be said to be blind: their sight being darkened as it were, by the excessive afflictions which they have suffered; (darkness being

ing an emblem of affliction) and which caused them to totter, as a lame person : their ears may be said to be deafened with the loud complaints of each other, without having it in their power to offer relief to their fellow sufferers : and by the Prophet's comparing them to a dumb man, he plainly pointed to the unparalleled patience and submission, with which the nation hath borne their afflictions ; which perfectly confirms the truth of the character given of the nation by this Prophet elsewhere, " As a lamb was he led to the slaughter," &c. *Isai. liii. 7.* as will be shewn at large in the Second Part of this work, when we come to treat of such prophecies, as Christians *only* apply to a Messiah : for it is really worthy of remark, that the Jews, in whatever place or country, they have been dispersed, have, with scarce a murmur, and without any rebellion or sedition whatsoever, patiently endured, and submitted to the infliction of the most unexampled oppressions and cruelties : so that they may justly be said to be dumb. But at the future redemption by the Messiah, he informs us, all these evils will be removed : " For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters,

and torrents in the deserts : And the parched *ground* shall become a pool, and the thirsty soil bubbling springs : and in the haunt of dragons shall spring forth the grass, with the reed and the bulrush." By this, he shews the abundant good which they will enjoy, instead of the hunger, thirst, &c. which they suffered during the captivity, when they were exiled and drove from place to place, and their whole property confiscated, without the least crime committed on their part. He then informs us, that in those waste and desolate places, where no man heretofore passed, " Shall be a path, and an highway ; and (that) it shall be called the way of holiness : no unclean person shall pass through it." This image of a path and an highway in the wilderness, points out the future restoration of the nation ; and also informs us, that the wicked amongst them ; such as do not believe the word of God, in the promises of a future redemption, will all be cut off, and not be allowed to enter the holy land ; (as will be shewn at large in the explanation of the prophecies of Ezekiel) for none but the faithful are to enter the land of promise : agreeable to what the Prophet

Prophet said elsewhere, "Open ye the gates, and let the righteous nation, constant in the truth, enter." (Isai. xxvi. 2.) But as to those of the nation, who do not firmly believe in the promises of God, by his Prophets; whose minds, are defiled, and contaminated with the impure stream of scepticism and unbelief; and which are properly the unclean persons mentioned by the Prophet; they are not to pass through this holy path; because God himself will be at their head: "But he himself shall be with them, walk in the way:" That is, he will lead them in the right path, as the cloud and pillar of fire led them when they went out of Egypt; so that, "The simple shall not err therein."

He then proceeds to inform us, that at their return, none of all the powerful kings or potentates will dare oppose them, or throw any impediment in their way, as was the case, on their return from Babylon. This, is forcibly expressed by the utter exclusion of all the ravenous beasts from the holy path, as in verse 9th. "No lion shall be there; nor shall the tyrant of the beasts come up thither: neither shall he be found there: but the redeemed shall walk in it."

Yea, the ransomed of the LORD shall return : they shall come to Zion with triumph : and perpetual gladness shall crown their heads. Joy and gladness shall they obtain ; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

In this verse, the Prophet informs us of three things, which are to be accomplished at their future restoration, extremely opposite to what took place at their return from Babylon. First, that they shall return in triumph : whereas, at their return from Babylon ; they were scoffed at, and hindered in the building by their enemies. Second, they are to be crowned with perpetual gladness ; which was not accomplished at their return from Babylon, or during the existence of the second temple, as is well known to every person, in the least acquainted with scripture, or the Jewish history. Third, they are not only to obtain joy and gladness, but sorrow and sighing are to be totally banished : for they are for ever to dwell in peace and plenty, and never go into captivity more. Hence, it is manifest, from the tenour of this remarkable prophecy, and the explanation of it here given, that it never yet hath been fulfilled : neither at their return from Babylon,

Babylon, nor at, or during the time of Jesus. A brief recapitulation of the whole, will set the matter in its true light.

The First Part contains a denunciation of the most extraordinary punishments ; indeed, nothing short of the total destruction of the enemies of the people of God : the Prophet, therefore, introduces the subject by a magnificent exordium, calling upon universal nature to attend to the proclamation of these events, in which the whole world, it should seem, are so much interested. He then publishes the decree of the Most High for the extirpation of all those nations against whom his wrath was kindled ; and amplifies this act of vengeance and destruction, by an admirable selection of the most splendid imagery ; illustrating it, by images borrowed from the Mosaical chaos, as if he was describing the total subversion of the universe itself. Having thus, in the four first verses, delivered himself in general terms concerning all those who had provoked to anger the defender of the cause of Zion ; he in verse 5th, speaks particularly of Edom and Botzrah, and those who should come to their assistance : for the unicorns,
bulls,

bulls, and wild goats, &c. denote, the ferocious, haughty, and cruel tyrants and chiefs of the nations, who provoked God, either by their impious doctrines, or in persecuting his chosen people, as expressed verse 8th. He then, in verse 9th. &c. by a succession of images borrowed from the overthrow of Sodom, and the appearance of a vast solitary desert, again describes the dreadful destruction of Botfrah, a city whose inhabitants are in the highest degree obnoxious to God, and his people. In verse 16th. he refers us to the word of God, for the truth of his predictions. And in chapter xxxvth, he, by the most beautiful imagery, taken almost entirely from the objects of nature, points out to us, the great and lasting happiness, both spiritual and temporal, which the nation will enjoy at its restoration; so that they are to be perpetually crowned with glory: a manifest proof, that this exalted degree of happiness hath never yet been enjoyed by them; but will certainly be accomplished, as well as the total destruction of their enemies, at the coming of the true Messiah. But, as nothing of this, was accomplished by Jesus, when he was upon

upon earth, it is plain, he could not be the person spoken of by the Prophets, who was to save Israel in the latter days.

The Seventh Prophecy commences verse 1st of chapter xlth. and is continued to verse 16th of chapter xli.

The Prophet having, in the preceding chapters, related the invasion of Senacherib, and his overthrow: as also the sickness of Hezekiah, and his restoration; and delivered a very explicit declaration of the impending ruin of the kingdom, the captivity of the royal family, and the people; proceeds now to inform us, that when they shall have received the due reward of their iniquities, they should certainly be redeemed; and therefore, opens the subject with great perspicuity and elegance, declaring God's command to his Prophets*, to comfort his people in captivity, to strengthen them in the true faith, by imparting to them the joyful tidings, that their punishment having now satisfied the Divine Justice, the time of their reconciliation and favour was near at hand; (and which perfectly agrees with what the Prophet said, chap. xxxv. verses 3d and 4th.

* See the Chaldee Paraphrast, Jona. on the passage.

as explained, in the preceding Prophecy) as he observes, " Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God : Speak animating words to Jerusalem, and declare unto her, that her appointed time is accomplished ; that the expiation of her iniquity is accepted ; that she hath received at the hand of the LORD double the punishment of all her sins." These expressions are highly consolatory and animating : for nothing can be more so to the nation, than to be informed, that not only the appointed time, which the Most High had decreed, that they should remain in captivity, was accomplished ; and that the expiation of their iniquity was accepted, but that they had received the full measure of punishment for all their sins, in the DOUBLE captivity, viz. that of Babylon, and the present ; so that they need not be under any apprehension of going into captivity again : for that all their sins had been expiated by the severe punishment they had received. He then seems to introduce a harbinger, giving orders to prepare the way for God, leading his people, as he did formerly from Egypt, " A voice crieth in the wilderness ; Prepare ye the way of the LORD ;
make

make straight in the desert an highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be brought low; and the crooked shall become strait, and the rough places a smooth plain." By this figurative language, he informs us that God himself will lead them to his holy mountain, and that no impediment whatever will be suffered to retard their progress: which will shew the truth and verity of prophecy, as he says, verse 5th. "And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see together, that the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." When the nations shall all see the salvation and redemption of the nation, in such a glorious manner, after so many hundred years captivity, degradation, and persecution, by almost every nation upon earth; they naturally, will all acknowledge the truth of prophecy; and that all that hath happened to the nation, is the word of God; and his appointment: for which reason, the Prophet calls this illumination, which will be the means of bringing all mankind to the knowledge of the One true God, the glory of the LORD: for while the nation is in captivity, and

the glorious promises made to them, are not accomplished; his name is profaned among the nations, (as already observed in the course of this work) either by the erroneous and impious doctrines maintained by several of them; or the disbelief of Divine Revelation in general, entertained by others. These enlightened Philosophers also, as the latter are pleased to call themselves, will not acknowledge the Justice of God in the punishment of the nations for their crimes. But when the redemption, and the glorious restoration of the nation shall be effected, in the manner above described; they all will be obliged to acknowledge the truth of Prophecy, and the Justice of God, not only in punishing the wicked, but also in rewarding the good: and thus will his holy name be glorified: because men will then be fully convinced of the free agency of man; and of course, they all will be induced to serve God in sincerity and truth.

The Prophet next proceeds to inform us, that the time is far distant when the redemption shall take place; during all which time, the spirit of prophecy will wholly cease, and the Prophets find no vision from
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the LORD ; because the nation will be banished from the holy land, and the Divine Presence departed from the temple, which was the fountain of prophecy : for no one ever prophesied, but either in the holy land, or concerning it, as the author of the book of Cozri observes * : we are therefore told, that at the future restoration, the spirit of prophecy will be again restored to the nation, (as already observed in different parts of this work) and the Prophets will prophecy as aforetime : as he says, verse 6th. &c. “ A voice sayeth, Proclaim.” This is the voice of prophecy, commanding the Prophets in the latter days to prophecy, of the redemption of the nation ; but the Prophets knowing the deplorable degraded state of the nation, will answer, “ What shall I proclaim ? all flesh is grass, and all its glory like the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; because the spirit of the LORD hath blown upon it : verily this people is grass.”

By this image, the Prophet shews that, when the spirit of prophecy shall return to the nation, and the Prophets be commanded

* Vide, Lib. Cozri, Pars II. Sect. 14.

to prophecy the near approach of their redemption; they, on account of the abject state of the nation, will observe, What shall I proclaim? seeing the nation is in a state of the utmost wretchedness, deprived of every good, withering and drooping in captivity, as the grass of the field, without the hope of vivification; and that, because the anger of the LORD hath blown on this people, and destroyed them by thousands and tens of thousands; so that there is but few of them left; and those scattered all over the face of the globe, in such a deplorable state, as to have no means left to effect their restoration. All which, is a manifest proof, that the redemption is not to take place, till after a great length of time, when the nation hath suffered numberless persecutions, and massacres; so that they will be reduced to the lowest ebb, and almost driven to despair; as well on account of their sufferings, as on account of the great length of the captivity; nearly despairing of their being ever redeemed; as is the case at present with many of the nation; and as Christians in general pretend: and which, is also an evident sign that the Prophet does not
speak

speak of their return from the Babylonish captivity; for they were not brought to so low, and depressed a state in Babylon. Nay, they were rather in a more flourishing condition in Babylon, than they were after their return; and which was the reason, that the rich and opulent, who were the most numerous, did not choose to return: so that the poorer sort only returned. The Prophet therefore, observes, that when the Prophets shall make this reply, God will answer, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Notwithstanding, saith the LORD, that they should be thus reduced, yet, shall they not be entirely destroyed, but shall certainly be redeemed at the appointed time; for the word of God which thou art now commanded to declare, shall stand; shall be fully accomplished: I therefore enjoin thee by all means to proclaim it: to which purpose, "Get thee up upon an high mountain, O thou who proclaimest glad tidings to Zion: lift up thy voice with strength, O thou who proclaimest glad tidings to Jerusalem: exalt it; be not afraid: say to the cities of Judah, behold your God." By this image, the Prophet

phet gives us to understand, that though, according to human probability, it was not likely that the nation would ever be restored to their own land again, on account of their dispersion in the different parts of the world, their decrease, the consequence of their sufferings; and their total inability to help themselves, as above shewn; yet, should he not be afraid of the accomplishment of his prophecy; but proclaim aloud the glad tidings to Zion and Jerusalem, saying to them, Behold your God. That is, that although your God, hath during the captivity hid his face from you, as Moses predicted*; yet, is he now come to dwell amongst you as aforetime.

He then proceeds to inform us also, that God would fight their battles, and avenge them of their enemies, as in verse 10th. "Behold, the LORD God will come with strength; and his arm shall prevail for him." For though Israel is weak as the withered grass, or the faded flower, and consequently, hath not power to oppose his enemies; lo, the arm of the LORD God shall prevail for them: for it is he that will fight their battles, as was the case when they came out of

* Deut. xxxi. 18.

Egypt*. And he also will avenge them of their enemies; for, "Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." He himself will punish them, as was the case in the destruction of the first born of the Egyptians†.

The Prophet then informs us, that although God will thus punish the nations, he will be exceeding careful of the Jewish nation, for, "Like a shepherd shall he feed his flock; in his arm shall he gather up the lambs, and shall bear them in his bosom; the nursing ewes shall he gently lead." By this beautiful figure, expressing with the greatest propriety as well as elegance, the tender attention of the shepherd to his flock, the Prophet points out to us, the care and sollicitude of the Supreme Being, in the preservation of the nation; and that on account of their low and weak state, he does not compare them to oxen, goats, &c. but to lambs; in the driving of whom, the utmost care and tenderness is necessary, as clearly appears from Jacob's apology to his brother Esau, (Gen. xxxiii. 13.) and as shewn by

* Exod. xiv. 24.

† Ibid. xii. 29.

Sir John Chardin, as Bishop Lowth* observes.

The Prophet then, addressing himself to the nations in the person of God, says to them, do not be surpris'd or wonder at what I say, concerning the redemption of the nation from captivity, after so many hundred years of oppression; than which, nothing seems more improbable, considering the helpless state they are in; but he who created the world, and called it into existence, is undoubtedly able to effect this also, as he observes, verse 12th, &c. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; and hath meted out the heavens with a span: and hath comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and hath weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath meted the air? The LORD: and who is the man that instructed him in counsel? With whom did he consult, to make him understand, and teach him the path of judgment; that he should impart to him science, and inform him in the way of understanding?" Now, if God by his infinite power was able to effect all this, how

* Lowth, Isai. xl. 11. Notes.

much

much more is he able to do what he pleases with the nations of the earth : for, “ Behold, the nations are as a drop from the bucket ; and as the small dust of the balance are they accounted : Behold, he taketh up the islands as an atom.”

The Prophet then, by a beautiful and uncommon image, informs us, that nothing will be able to divert God from his purpose of punishing the nations : for not all the beasts that they possibly can offer, will suffice to make an atonement for them, as he observes, verse 16th. “ And Lebanon is not sufficient for the fire : nor his beasts sufficient for a burnt offering. All the nations are as nothing before him ; they are esteemed by him as less than nought, and vanity.”

The Prophet then, in a strain of eloquent, energetic, and sublime language, draws a comparison between the God of Israel, and the gods of the different nations ; which is continued from verse 18th, to verse 7th, of chapter 41st. In which, is also introduced, the call of Abraham, the choice made of him and his posterity, his success over the kings, and the alarm of the idolaters at the

event. After this, he again returns to the consolation of Israel, assuring them, that as God had preserved them hitherto, he would cause them to triumph over their enemies also, verse 8th. &c. "But thou, Israel, my servant; thou, Jacob, whom I have chosen; the seed of Abraham my friend: Thou, whom I have led by the hand from the ends of the earth: and called thee from the principal men thereof; and and I said unto thee, thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and will not reject thee. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I have strengthened thee, I have assisted thee; I have even supported thee with my faithful right hand. Behold, they, that were enraged against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded: they, that contended with thee, shall become as nothing, and shall utterly perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even the men that strove with thee: they shall become as nothing, and as mere nought, even the men that opposed thee in battle. For I am the LORD thy God, that holds thee fast by thy right hand: that says unto thee, Fear not; I am thy helper."

Having

Having thus shewn how God preserved the nation amidst the numerous enemies that surrounded them, and were ready to swallow them up : he again returns to speak of their redemption, and the vengeance that God will take upon their enemies, verse 14th. “ Fear not, thou worm of Jacob ; ye mortals of Israel.” By this image, the Prophet has inimitably described the state of the nation in this long and dreadful captivity : for they are actually considered, in the scale of mankind, as worms, mere reptiles ; the reproach of men, and despised by all people. And as to valour, they are considered but as dead men, of little or no value ; for that is the real sense of *תולדות*, which I have translated *mortals*, it being impossible to convey an adequate sense of the energetic meaning which it bears in the original, in a translation. But, though thou art thus, says the Prophet, yet, fear thou not ; for as thy redemption is not to be effected by natural causes, there is no necessity, for thee, to muster great and powerful armies, for, “ I am thy helper, saith the LORD : and thy redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made thee a threshing wain ; a

new corn-drag, armed with pointed teeth : thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small ; and reduce the hills to chaff : Thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall bear them away ; and the tempest shall scatter them abroad : but thou shalt rejoice in the LORD : in the Holy One of Israel shalt thou triumph." By this imagery, the Prophet has shewn the entire destruction of the enemies of the Jews, at the time of their redemption : the subject of which, is continued to verse 6th, of chapter xlii. except some small portion, addressed to idolaters, &c. I shall take notice briefly of the different parts which speak of the nation.

The Prophet immediately proceeds, verse 17th. to shew the miserable state of the nation in captivity : at the same time assuring them, that the LORD JEHOVAH, would certainly redeem them ; by which they will be fully convinced that the LORD only is God. " The poor and the needy seek for water, and there is none ; their tongue is parched with thirst : " This forcibly exhibits the lamentable and deplorable state of the nation ; in contrast to which, the Prophet has finely described the deliverance of the nation,

nation, and the plenty they are to enjoy. "I the LORD will answer them; the God of Israel, I will not forsake them. I will open in the high places rivers; and in the midst of the vallies fountains: I will make the desert a standing pool; and the dry ground streams of waters. In the wilderness I will give the cedar: the acacia, the myrtle, and the tree producing oil: I will plant the fir-tree in the desert; the pine and the box together: that they may see, and that they may know, and may consider, and understand at once, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and that the Holy One of Israel hath created it." When they all will see the nation suddenly elevated from a state of the most abject misery, to that of the most exalted happiness; they all will instantly be obliged to acknowledge, that it was not owing to any natural cause, but to the interference of the Holy One of Israel, whose power is over all; and whom they will then all acknowledge for the only One true God, the Sovereign of the Universe. Thus, it is clear, that all the world will be brought to the knowledge of the One God, by means of the Jews, as I have already observed in
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my Letters to Dr. Priestley* ; for as they are now scattered almost over the whole face of the earth ; their miraculous restoration, &c. will of course, be made known in all parts of the globe ; and thus, will the truth by their means be disseminated throughout the world.

In verse 25th, &c. The Prophet, in very concise terms, informs us of the captivity of the ten tribes, and of their return in the latter days. As he had in the preceding verses observed, that there was not one among all the Gentile nations, that could of a truth, foretell future events ; he now acquaints us, that this was not the case with Israel ; for that they had real Prophets among them, who by the true spirit of prophecy, foretold future events, as he says, “ I have raised (one) up from the north, and he is come.” I foretold by the mouth of the Prophet the coming of the king of Assyria, whom I had appointed to destroy Samaria†, and it is come to pass : for at the time that this Pro-

* Letters to Dr. Priestley, in Answer to his First Letters to the Jews, page 54. 1st Edit. and page 50, of the Second and Third Editions.

† Thus also Jerem. i. 14. and iv. 6.

phhecy was delivered by Ifaiah, Samaria was already destroyed : he therefore says, he is come ; an evidence of the truth of what the Prophet predicted.

He then speaks of their restoration, "From the rising sun shall he (the Messiah) invoke my name : and shall come upon the princes, as on mortar ; even as the potter treadeth down the clay." For then the kings and princes of the earth, will be esteemed by the Messiah, but as clay. Having thus shewn the captivity of Israel, as also their redemption, (for Halah, and Habor, &c. where the ten tribes were carried captive, lay north-east of the holy land) two events diametrically opposite to each other, he again challenges the gods of the nations, ver. 26th. "Who hath declared this from the beginning, that we might know it ? and beforehand, that we might say, The prediction is true."

The Prophet then informs us, that three perfections are included in the certain prediction of future events. First, the perfect and exalted degree of him (the One true God) who commands the Prophet to proclaim such and such events. Second, the per-

perfection of the Prophet who declares the prophecy. Third, the perfection of the nation among whom the spirit of prophecy exists. But none of all these ever had existence, among any of the nations, except the Jews; and therefore, he says, "There was not one that foretold it." Not one of all their oracles was able to predict it. "Not one that declared it." There was no true Prophet among them, to declare it. "There was not one that heard your words." Here, as if speaking to the idols, he tells them that no one could hear their words; for that it was all fiction: neither were any of the nations worthy of having true Prophets among them, because they suffered themselves to be deluded by such vanities.

He then proceeds, ver. 27, "I first (say) to Zion, Behold they are here: and to Jerusalem will I give the messenger of glad tidings." This sentence, I find, has greatly perplexed the generality of Christian commentators; who not being able to enter into the true spirit of the language, its idioms, and phraseology; have totally mistaken the sense of the passage: for it is not the reading of Hebrew superficially, or collating of incorrect and faulty

faulty manuscripts, how numerous soever, that forms the true Hebraist, and enables him to understand perfectly, the prophetic language, so as to know for a certainty, where an ellipsis, emendation, or transposition is necessary: No: these will not effect it: on the contrary, it requires a profound knowledge in the language, which is scarcely attainable, but by many years intense study, and application; especially, an early acquaintance with it in ones youth, so as to become habituated to it, as to a mother tongue. It therefore, is no wonder, that inferior judges, often imagine that to be obscure, which had they been thoroughly acquainted with the language, (so different in the boldness of its style: but above all, in the sudden transitions of person, time, and place) would have appeared exceeding clear. Of this, we have an instance, in the passage now under consideration: for Dr. Lowth, late Bishop of London, in his notes on Isaiah, observes, " This verse is somewhat obscure, by the transposition of the parts of the sentence, and the peculiar manner in which it is divided into parrallel lines." He then, attempts to explain the form and sense of it by a para-

phrase, which is far from the real sense and meaning of the Prophet, as will be shewn presently. And a late writer observes *, “ The meaning of this verse is doubtful. I follow the LXX and Arabic, who seem to have had the word אָתֵן in the first sentence, and not in the last.” But both these opinions, are so far from truth, that on the contrary, the verb אָתֵן *I will give*: has no connexion whatever with the first part of the sentence; the real meaning of which, I shall also explain by way of paraphrase: but must first premise, that the Prophet having shewn the captivity of the ten tribes, as also their restoration at the coming of the Messiah; and having challenged the idols as above mentioned, observes in confirmation of the truth of Divine Revelation, “ Of the first (i. e. their captivity) I say to Zion, Behold they are here;” Behold, it is already come to pass; so that ye may plainly see, that this prophecy is exactly fulfilled; and therefore, ye ought to believe the truth of the second prediction, viz. “ That to Jerusalem I will give the messenger of glad tid-

* A new Translation of Isaiah, with Notes, &c. by a
LAYMAN.

ings.”

ings." This, is the real sense of the prophecy, in which, there is not the least obscurity, but the whole is thus rendered plain and connected. In the last two verses of the chapter, he again speaks of the vanity of the idols, &c.

In chapter xlii. verse 1st, till the end of verse 4th, he speaks of the Messiah, whom he characterizes as follows. First. That he is to be God's chosen servant, the same as was his ancestor David. "Behold my servant, on whom I will depend;" the same as a king depends on a confidential and tried servant. "My chosen in whom my soul delighteth." Second. He is to be endowed with the spirit of prophecy; "I have made my spirit rest upon him:" and thus says the Prophet elsewhere, (chap. ii. 2.) "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him," &c. And as he will be thus gifted, he will not only judge his own people, but "He shall bring forth judgement to the nations." Conformable to what the Prophet said, (chap. ii. 4.) "And he shall judge among the nations; and he shall plead with many peoples." And as those who judge, or admonish, often express themselves, in a loud,

haughty, authoritative tone; the Prophet informs us, that the conduct of the Messiah will be the very reverse of this, for, "He shall not cry aloud, nor raise a clamour, nor cause his voice to be heard without." Neither will he rule arbitrarily, nor oppress even the weak and defenceless, as he says verse 3d. "The bruised reed he shall not break; and the dimly burning flax, he shall not quench: he shall bring forth judgement to truth." For as his knowledge will not be a natural, but supernatural endowment, an emanation of the spirit of the holy God, he of course, will judge according to truth. He then informs us, verse 4th, that he will not be under the necessity of fatiguing himself, by being obliged to go about from place to place in different countries, in order to establish his authority, and inculcate his doctrine, for that the nations will of their own accord receive his law, and therefore, "He shall not be fatigued, nor (his force) be broken, until he hath firmly seated judgement in the earth: and the islands shall earnestly wait for his law."

This, is the character of the Messiah, as given by the Prophet, in a plain undisguised manner:

manner: and which Christians in general apply to Jesus. And Bishop Lowth, in his notes on Isaiah, observes, "In this chapter he proceeds to the great deliverance: and at once brings forth into full view, without throwing any veil of allegory over the subject, the Messiah. Behold, my servant, Messiah, says the Chaldee. St. Matthew has applied it directly to Christ: nor can it with any justice or propriety be applied to any other person or character whatever." That it cannot be applied to any person or character that has hitherto appeared, I heartily assent to: but whoever will carefully and candidly, in an impartial and unprejudiced manner, take a view of the acts recorded of Jesus in the New Testament, and compare them with the character of the person here given, will be fully convinced that, he could not be the person meant by the Prophet; for not one of the conditions of the character of the Messiah, so plainly foretold by the Prophet, was ever fulfilled in the person of Jesus: for in the first place, he was not entitled to the character of a Prophet, because he was deficient in the essential character of a Prophet, as I have shewn at large, in my

Answer

Answer to Dr. Priestley's First Letters to the Jews. Second, he was so far from judging the nations, that he was not even a judge among those of his own nation, as I have already shewn in this work*, and in my Letters to Dr. Priestley, &c. Much less did he fulfill the third condition, of firmly seating judgement in the earth. Nor fourthly, did the nations or islands earnestly wait for his law; on the contrary, he went about from place to place preaching and teaching, &c. and afterwards sent out twelve apostles to preach and inculcate his doctrine, which afterwards, from the time of Constantine, was so successfully promulgated by fire and sword, in direct opposition, to what the Prophet informs us is to be the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as must fully convince every candid, impartial, and unbiassed mind, that the character here given of the Messiah, can by no means, with justice and propriety be applied to Jesus; because, not one of the characters which distinguish the Messiah, were accomplished in his person; consequently, the accomplishment of them remains to be fulfilled in the person of

* Page 88, 89.

the true Messiah, who is to appear at the appointed time, to redeem the nation, as predicted by the Prophet.

The Prophet then proceeds to inform us, that we are not to consider the restoration of Israel by the Messiah, as a light and trivial matter: but that, considering the degraded and oppressed state of the nation, it may rather be deemed a species of creation, and therefore only to be effected by him, who created the world at the beginning, as he says, verse 5th. "Thus saith the God, even the LORD, who created the heavens, and stretched them out; who spread abroad the earth, and the produce thereof; who giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them who walk therein." He who hath done all this, he alone, is able to restore the nation, from its abject, and deplorable state; and therefore, speaking to the Messiah, he says, (verse 6th.) "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness:" I have a long time spoken of thee by the mouth of my Prophets; and therefore, at the appointed time of the redemption, "I will take hold of thee, and will preserve thee:" I will give thee power and dominion above all men,
and

and will support thee in it. “ And I will give thee for a covenant to *my* people, for a light to the nations.” You shall be a covenant of peace and safety to my people, and shalt also enlighten the nations, as farther explained, verse 7th. “ To open the eyes of the blind; to bring the captive out of confinement; and from the dungeon, those that dwell in darkness.” Here, the proper office of the Messiah is clearly shewn, as well in respect to the nations as to Israel: for as to the former, who may justly be said to be in a state of spiritual blindness, on account of their not having a clear idea of the truth and Unity of God: he is therefore, to enlighten them, and open their eyes to the truth: and as to the latter, who are in a state of bondage, he is to bring the captive out of confinement, &c. Thus, will he bring ALL to the knowledge of the true faith. And therefore, the Prophet says, verse 8th, “ I am JEHOVAH, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to the graven images.” God will not then any longer, suffer any other to assume the honour due to him, as Creator of the world, as hath been, and as is the case at present, when
men

men pay divine honours to images, and dead men; No; such things will then cease to be: for the Messiah will bring all mankind to the knowledge and worship of the One eternal living God. And as an evident proof of the truth of what he had thus predicted, he says, verse 9th, "The former predictions, lo! they are come to pass; and new events I now declare; before they spring forth, I make them known unto you." Nothing can be a stronger, or more convincing proof of the truth of prophecy, and the accomplishment of the future events so foretold, than this position: for if the former prophecies, delivered so many centuries back, foretelling the dreadful calamities that were to befall the nation in consequence of their disobedience, and their dispersion into almost every part of the globe; and at the same time, clearly pointing out their miraculous preservation amidst such a number of surrounding enemies, have all been fully accomplished; not the least doubt, can possibly be entertained of the completion of the future events predicted by the Prophet.

The Prophet having in the preceding verses, shewn the great blessings that will

attend the coming of the Messiah, who will be the means of bringing all mankind to the knowledge of the One true God; now exhorts them, to return thanks to him, for his great mercy and kindness: and also informs us, that God will not for ever suffer his people to remain in captivity, oppressed by their persecutors; but will rouse himself as a mighty man, to avenge them of their enemies, whom he emphatically styles his enemies; as in verse 10th, &c. "Sing unto the LORD a new song; his praise from the ends of the earth: ye that go down to the sea, and all that fill it: ye distant sea coasts, and ye that dwell therein. Let the desert, and the cities thereof lift up their voice; the villages inhabited by Kedar; let the inhabitants of the rock utter a joyful sound; let them shout from the top of the mountains: let them ascribe glory to the LORD; and in the islands make known his praise. The LORD shall march forth like an hero; like a mighty warrior shall he rouse his vengeance: he shall cry aloud; he shall shout amain: he shall prevail over his enemies. I have long held my peace: shall I yet keep silence? shall I still contain myself?

self? I will cry out like a woman in travail: I will swallow up, and devour them at once. I will make waste the mountains and hills, and burn up all the grass that is upon them: I will make the rivers islands; and scorch up the pools of water." He then informs us, that God will at that time lead his people back to the holy land, through ways not known to them; alluding to what the Prophet Ezekiel said, (chap. xxv. 35.) "And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples," &c. as will be shewn at large in the explanation of that prophecy. He also shews that, at that time those who had trusted in idols and vanities, will be ashamed and confounded, verse 16th, &c. "I will lead the blind in a way, which they have not known; and through paths which they knew not will I guide them; I will turn darkness into light before them; and the rugged ways into a smooth plain. These things will I do for them, and will not forsake them. They who went backward, shall be utterly confounded, even they who trust in the graven image; who say unto the molten image, Ye are our God!"

The Prophet then proceeds to shew the

cause of our captivity: for as he had in the preceding verses mentioned that, God had long held his peace; he now gives the reason, why God had thus long held his peace, and suffered his people to remain in captivity; because they did not hearken to the words of the Prophets, but insulted them, as shewn verse 18th, &c. "Hear, O ye deaf; and ye blind, look attentively, that ye may see." Here the Prophet upbraids them with acting as blind and deaf persons; since they would neither hear the words of the Prophets, nor see, and consider the wonderful works of God: on the contrary, they scoffed at, and mocked the Prophet, saying, "Who is blind but my servant; and deaf as my messenger, whom I have sent: who is blind, as he who is perfect; and blind as the servant of the LORD?" This was the manner, they treated the Prophets, and therefore, the Prophet Hosea says, (Hos. chap. ix. 7.) "The days of visitation are come: the days of recompence are come, Israel shall know that the Prophet was foolish, that the man of spirit was mad: for the greatness of thine iniquity," &c. The Prophet thus proceeds, verse 20th, "Ye have often seen, but ye regard

regard not; your ears are open, but ye hear not." Ye have frequently seen the wonderful works of God, but have not paid attention to them, nor would ye hear the admonitions of the Prophets, though sent by God to instruct you, and lead you in the right path, for, "The LORD was pleased for his own righteousness sake, to magnify the Law, and adorn it." He was desirous that the law should be magnified and adorned by Israel, by their strict observance of it, for their salvation; and therefore, continually sent his Prophets to admonish them; but as they would not hearken to them, they are spoiled, &c. verse 22d. "For this is a people, spoiled and plundered: all of them are snared in holes, and plunged in dark dungeons; they are become a spoil, and there is none to rescue them; a plunder, and no one said, Restore."

He then proceeds to shew that, notwithstanding all this hath happened to them, yet, is there none, that attend to, and consider it as the effect of God's wrath: acknowledge their guilt, and return to the LORD to seek his forgiveness, in sincerity and truth, verse 23d, &c. "Who is there among you, that will

will listen to this, that will hearken, and attend to it for the future? Who hath given Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to plunderers? Was it not the LORD against whom they* have sinned; in whose ways they would not walk, and whose law they would not obey? Therefore he poured out upon them the heat of his wrath, and the violence of war: and it kindled a flame about him, yet did he not perceive it; and it burned him, yet he did not consider it."

The Prophet having thus shewn the cause of their dreadful captivity, &c. proceeds now to comfort them, by assuring them, that although they were on account of their manifold sins, sent into captivity, yet, should they not be afraid of being totally annihilated amongst the nations, whither they should be driven, as was the case of many great and powerful monarchies; for that he who created and formed them, would most assuredly protect them, chap. xlii. ver. 1st. "Yet now, thus saith the LORD, who created thee, O Jacob; and who formed thee, O Israel: Fear thou not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

* Heb. We have sinned.

When

When thou passest through waters, I am with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm thee: when thou walkest in the fire, thou shalt not be scorched; and the flame shall not take hold of thee."

By this figurative language, the Prophet clearly points to what hath befallen the nation in Spain, Portugal, and other parts, during this long and dreadful captivity: viz. that on account of the numerous fearful persecutions and massacres which they suffered, numbers who were not possessed of sufficient courage and fortitude to hold up against these afflictions, apostatized; others had their children forced from them, as already mentioned page 30—32, and clearly shews us, that though this hath happened to them, yet are they not to be entirely separated from Israel; but shall most assuredly be united again to the nation, as God says, "I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine." For as I originally called thee by thy name, and made choice of thee, to be my peculiar chosen people, it is not in thy power, by any means, to incorporate thyself with any other nation, or religion, without my consent; for thou art mine, and mine, thou must

must then of necessity remain: and therefore, though, "Thou passest through the waters, I am with thee." Although thou shouldest be baptized with water; yet am I with thee; thou canst not withdraw thyself from my service; for though thou shouldest pass through all the rivers, yet, would they be insufficient, to wash thee, from thy allegiance to me: and which hath really been the case: for almost all those who apostatized, dissembled, and returned to the bosom of the nation, on the first opportunity that offered; and their descendants are continually doing it to this day, as mentioned page 18. note 2d. And the consequence of this is, that they have constantly been accused of relapsing to Judaism, and are therefore without mercy, frequently committed to the flames by the inquisition: the Prophet therefore assures them, that though they walk through the fire, they shall not be scorched; and the flame shall not take hold of them. Although their bodies are thus delivered over to the fire, yet shall not their souls, their immortal part be scorched, nor the flame take hold of it: "For I am the LORD, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy

thy saviour; I have given Egypt for thy ransom; Cush, and Seba, in thy stead." And, as I have aforetime given Egypt, &c. for thy ransom, so, "Because thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honoured, and I have loved thee; therefore, will I give men instead of thee, and people* instead of thy soul. Fear thou not, for I am with thee: from the east I will bring thy children, and from the west I will gather thee together: I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, withhold not: bring my sons from afar; and my daughters from the ends of the earth: Every one that is called by my name, and whom for my glory I have created; whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made." The Prophet thus, plainly shews the restoration of the nation from all parts of the world, where they are dispersed in this present captivity; and that they are all to be collected: all that have been, or are called by his name; every one that belonged to the nation, called his peculiar people; although they or their parents had apostatized; yet, are they all to be collected; not one is to be left among the nations;

* Heb. Peoples.

because he had formed them, and chosen them for his glory; to hand down the knowledge of his Unity among the nations hitherto; and at their restoration, be the means, of bringing all mankind to the true knowledge of God; when he alone, will be acknowledged, and all false worship abolished: which may very justly be called, the true glory of God. These events, it must be acknowledged, have never yet been fulfilled, not at their return from the Babylonish captivity; and much less in the person of Jesus: for he was so far, from collecting the lost sheep of Israel, and punishing their enemies, as here foretold by the Prophet; that on the contrary, in his time, their enemies grew strong and powerful, and a few years after his death, carried them captive out of their land, which they have never recovered, but remain scattered in all parts of the globe to this very day. Whence it is manifest, that this Prophecy, remains to be accomplished; which it no doubt will, at the coming of the true Messiah, at the appointed time.

The eighth Prophecy, commences chap. xlixth. verse 7th, and is continued to the end of the last verse of the same.

The

The purport of this prophecy is clear; its introduction is obvious: "Thus saith the LORD, the redeemer of Israel, his sanctifier." By this expression, the Prophet informs us, that God was not only the temporal redeemer of Israel, but that he was their spiritual redeemer also; their Sanctifier. He then proceeds, "To the despised soul; the abhorred nation; the servant of (many) rulers." In these few lines, the Prophet has with a masterly hand, drawn a picture of the real abject state of the nation, and the estimation in which they are held, in this present captivity: for in the first place, Christians consider them, as a blind, obstinate, and superstitious people; labouring under a spiritual blindness: and that having crucified the lord of life, and still continuing to reject him, they are now in a state of damnation, and cannot be saved, unless they are regenerated by baptism, and thus brought into the bosom of the Church: he therefore, justly calls them, "the despised soul:" for their souls are considered as actually lost to salvation, in the state they are in at present. Secondly, being deprived of all temporal honour and glory, and on account of some

peculiarities of feature, &c. held in perfect contempt; the Prophet very properly calls them, "the abhorred nation." He then, thirdly, shews their extreme misery, in being "the servant of many rulers;" so that they are not oppressed by one master only, but are cruelly treated by different masters; and as these masters are sometimes at enmity with each other, they are sure to suffer, let who will prevail, and are not compassionated by any: Nay, even the halcyon days of peace, and the joyful moments of tranquility, have been equally fatal to them, with those of war. The truth of this, may be easily proved, by a reference to their History in the East, in Spain*, Portugal, England, &c. where we may find, what prodigious numbers of our miserable and ill-fated ancestors were massacred, in cool blood, or sacrificed to a blind indignation, for fancied transgressions, the commission of which, was not only untrue, but impossible, as will be shewn more at large, in the second part of this work. The Prophet therefore, to comfort them, assures them of the enjoyment of three things, instead of their sufferings, that will be really

* See Basnage's History of the Jews. Anglo Judaei, &c.

glorious

glorious and honourable to them; both as to their temporal, and spiritual state: for instead of being a servant to many masters, "Kings shall see (them) and rise up:" and instead of being an abhorred nation, "Princes also shall worship (them)." And he farther informs them, that this would not be on account of their great power, &c. but, "For the sake of the LORD, who is faithful." Who is faithful in the performance of his promise to redeem them, which will then be fulfilled. And, instead of the reproach now cast upon them, on account of their religious tenets, for which, he calls them, "the despised soul," he informs us, that they will be acknowledged to be an holy and sanctified people, "Because of the Holy One of Israel, for he hath chosen thee." And who, consequently, will endow them with a state of spiritual perfection, under the immediate protection of his divine providence.

The Supreme Being then informs the Prophet when this will be, verse 8th, "Thus saith the LORD: In the season of acceptance have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee:" Be not surprised, that
I have

I have not during this long captivity, answered thee in thy troubles, by redeeming thee; for behold, there is a certain appointed season for thy redemption, which, it shall by no means exceed: being the time, I determined to punish you in captivity, for your sins; from which, being cleansed, the acceptable season will commence, when I will answer you: and on the day decreed by me, for your salvation, I will help, and save you. But, as you may say, who will live to see this day? as perhaps, long before the appointed time, our enemies, by the cruel and dreadful afflictions which they inflict upon us, may totally destroy and annihilate us: I assure you, "That I will preserve thee:" I will preserve thee during the captivity: and at the time of thy redemption, will "Give thee for a covenant of the people." Ye shall be my covenanted established people for ever. And thus says Moses, (Deut. xxviii. 9.) "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself," &c. And at that time, the resurrection will also take place; for the appointed day above mentioned, shall be, "To restore the earth:" That is, as Jonathan explains it, לְחַיֵּת הָאָרֶץ

צדיקא ושכבין בעפרא To raise up the righteous who sleep in the dust.

The Prophet then, again mentions their return to their land, the redemption of the captives, and the resurrection of the dead: for as to the first, he says, "To cause the desolate heritages to be possessed." To cause them to possess their ancient inheritance, which hath been desolate, during this long captivity. Concerning the second, he says, "Saying to those who are bound, Go forth;" For the captives, are compared to prisoners bound with fetters. And of the third, he says, "And to those that are in darkness, Appear:" for the dead, are actually in the dark, in their graves covered with earth; but at the time of the resurrection, will appear publickly to mankind. He also informs us, that they all will be restored, and that during their journey, they shall not be in want of any thing: "They shall feed beside the ways, and on all the eminences shall be their pasture. They shall not hunger, neither shall they thirst; neither shall the glowing heat, or the sun smite them: for he that hath compassion upon them, shall lead them: and by the springs of water, he will guide

guide them. And I will make all my mountains an even way; and my causeys shall be raised on high. Lo! these shall come from afar; and lo! these from the north and west; and these from the land of Sinim." The description of the journey, the plenty that is to attend them, and the guidance of them by the LORD JEHOVAH in person; together with their collection from the four quarters of the globe: (for by the expression from afar, properly denotes the same, as if he had said מִמֶּזְרָח from the east, because, the east is far from the land of promise, it being situated rather more to the west. And the land of Sinim, denotes the south, as Jonathan observes, מִמֶּזְרָח דְּרוֹמָא From the land of the south) all plainly demonstrate, that this prophecy, was not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity, as Christian commentators in general seem to explain it: neither will any be so hardy, as to say, that it was fulfilled by Jesus; as it does not in any one instance accord with any act of his recorded in the New Testament: of course, it is manifest, that it points to the future glorious restoration of the nation, from this present captivity, in the person of the true Messiah:

Messiah: and the latter part of the prophecy, tends greatly to strengthen the truth and force of this position.

In verse 13th, the Prophet exhorts all nature to give thanks to God, for the great deliverance of his chosen people. "Sing aloud, O ye heavens; and rejoice, O earth; ye mountains burst forth into song: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have compassion on his afflicted."

The Prophet then proceeds to exhibit the complaint of Zion, during this long captivity, together with God's kind and animating answer. "But Zion saith, the LORD hath forsaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking infant; that she should have no tenderness for the son of her womb? even these may forget; But I will not forget thee." And here, it is proper, that we enquire, why God's answer, was not commensurate to Zion's complaint: for the complaint of Zion was twofold, viz. that the LORD had forsaken her, and that he had also forgotten her: whereas, God only answers her concerning the forgetfulness, but is silent to the charge of forsaking her: the reason of which

is, that Zion, during this long captivity, complained, that the LORD had forsaken her, as a woman, whose husband hath forsaken, and left her, and gone far distant from her: thus hath he left her a prey to the nations, without relieving her from her misery; and also complains, that he had not thus only forsaken her, but had also forgotten her, as if she was totally erased from his heart, and was no more in being: so that there is not the-least hope of his ever returning to her again. To this, God answers, by seeming to acknowledge that, he had indeed forsaken her, on account of her manifold sins, but that he had by no means forgotten her: and therefore, brings an example from those whose tenderness is most exemplary, to shew that, although such might perhaps forget, yet, would he not forget; and as a proof, observes, verse 16. "Behold, on the palms of my hands have I delineated thee: thy walls are for ever in my sight." As it might have been common with mankind, when they wished to remember any thing in a particular manner, to bind something about their hands, or fingers, or perhaps write it on their hands; so, God, when speaking according to
to

to the language of man; expresses himself thus, to shew that, he is continually thinking of them; and that their walls, which are broken down, are for ever in his sight, always thinking to restore them to their former state. And it is not a little surprising, that Bishop Lowth, in his notes on this passage, should observe, " This is certainly an allusion to some practice, common among the Jews at that time, of making marks on their hands and arms, by punctures on the skin, &c.—They had a method of making such punctures indelible by fire, or by staining. See Note on chap. xlv. 5*. It is well known, that the pilgrims at the holy sepulchre get themselves marked in this manner, with what are called the Ensigns of Jerusalem. Maundrel, p. 75; where he tells us how it is performed; and this art is practiced by travelling Jews all over the

* In this Note, he has committed, a far greater blunder; and which clearly evinces his ignorance of the Prophetic language, and his slavish adherence to a wretched system, of correcting the printed text by manuscripts, &c. (See Jarchi, Kimchi, Aben Ezra, &c.) and of which, I mean to take notice in a future publication, dedicated entirely to that subject, and Kennicot's foolish, and ridiculous scheme.

world at this day." As it is not to be supposed, that he could be so ignorant of the Jewish Ritual, as not to know, that the making of marks by punctures on the skin in the manner he describes, was strictly forbidden them, (Levit. xix. 28.) How could he then suppose it to be a practice common among them at that time? What! because ignorant, zealous, bigotted, and superstitious pilgrims, get themselves marked, at what they call the holy sepulchre, with some foolish signs, are the Jews therefore to be branded with a crime to which they were strangers? But is it reasonable to suppose, that God would make use of an image (allowing for a moment, that they had fallen into such an unlawful practice) so highly offensive to him, as this must be, being the direct contrary to what he had commanded; to shew his continual regard and attention towards them: for that would appear, as approving of the practice, which he had condemned by the hand of his servant Moses: I am sure, nothing can be more absurd and improbable, than a supposition like this. He seems also to have been as little acquainted with their customs and manners at this present time; for

for no such art is practiced by the travelling Jews all over the world, at this day, as he has asserted: as I never knew, nor heard of any such in my life; notwithstanding a strict enquiry on this subject, in my correspondence with the learned Jews in several parts of the world, as well as those in this kingdom.

The Prophet having thus shewn, that God had not forgotten them, but was continually thinking of them and their restoration; observes, “Thy children made haste:” Although I have not forgotten thee, yet have thy children, the children of Zion, made haste to forget their country: they had no regard for it, but were the cause of its destruction, for, “Thy destroyers, and they that made thee waste, came forth of thee*.” They were thine own offspring: which

* I cannot here forbear observing, that, Bishop Lowth's note on this verse, is one of the most false, and wretched pieces of criticism ever penned; and appears to me, to be the consequence of a slavish adherence to systems; one of which, as already mentioned in the preceding note, may not unaptly be called the *SCRIPTURE CORRECTING MANIÆ*, with which, for some few years back, the Christian commentators, but more especially, the Authors of the *New*, and *Metrical translations* of the Prophetic writings, have been so miserably afflicted.

plainly

plainly shews, that they had forgotten their relationship to thee.

In contrast to this, the Prophet proceeds to inform us, that at the time of the redemption, they will all be gathered together, from all parts of the globe; so that the country will be replenished and adorned with them; and that although they have been so greatly reduced in the captivity, by their extreme sufferings; yet, should they be so abundant at the restoration, as to be straitened for room; as in verse 18th, &c. "Lift up thine eyes around, and see; all these are gathered together, they come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, Surely thou shalt clothe and bind thyself with them all, as the bride doth her ornaments. For thy waste, and thy desolate places, and thy land laid in ruins: even now it shall be straitened with inhabitants; and they that devoured thee, shall be removed far away. The sons, of whom thou wast bereaved, shall yet say in thine ears: this place is too strait for me; make room for me, that I may dwell. And thou shalt say in thine heart: who hath begotten me these? I was bereaved of my children, and solitary; an exile, and an outcast; who then hath

hath nursed these up? Lo! I was abandoned, and alone; these then, where were they?" As Zion will thus be surprised at the sudden return of her children, the Prophet informs her, that all this will be effected by the Power of God, who will make the very nations, that have hitherto so cruelly persecuted them, be the instruments of their restoration, as in verse 22d, &c. "Thus saith the LORD God: Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations; and to the people will I exalt my signal; and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom*, and thy daughters shall be borne on their shoulders: and kings shall be thy foster fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; with their faces to the earth, they shall bow down unto thee, and shall lick the dust of thy feet. And thou shalt know that I am the LORD; and that those who trust in him, shall not be ashamed."

As mankind in general, may doubt the accomplishment of this promise, on account of the great power and strength of the nations; the Prophet introduces them as arguing on the subject, as also God's answer to

* Or, Lap.

their

their reasoning; verse 24th, &c. " Shall the spoil be taken away from the mighty? or shall the lawful captive be rescued?" For these were lawfully taken in battle; and therefore justly detained. " But thus saith the LORD: The captives of the mighty shall be retaken;" for I am more mighty than you. " And the spoil seized by the violent shall be rescued." For ye took it not lawfully, but by force and violence; it therefore shall not only be delivered out of your hands: but I will punish you in a most exemplary manner; and make ye the instruments of your own punishment; as in the latter part of verse 25th, &c. " For with those, that contended with thee, I will contend; and thy children I will deliver. And I will gorge thine oppressors with their own flesh; and with their own blood, as with new wine, will I drench them: and all flesh shall know, that I the LORD am thy saviour; and that thy redeemer is the Mighty One of Jacob."

From the whole tenour of this prophecy, it must be manifest to every dispassionate mind, that it hath never yet been fulfilled; for their return from Babylon does not accord with any one feature of it: for as to
their

their journey from thence, it did not in the least resemble that here described by the Prophet: neither did they return from the east, north, and west, and the land of Sinim, or the south: whence, it is clear, that this prophecy denotes the return of the *whole* nation: not the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin only, but the other ten tribes also: whose return, together with those that have apostatized, and those who shall rise at the resurrection, will so encrease their numbers, as to render the words of the Prophet concerning the great populousness of the nation, which at present is so greatly reduced by their sufferings, as to raise doubts of the accomplishment of the prophecy, perfectly just, and strictly conformable to truth: This, it is well known, did not take place at their return from the Babylonish captivity. Neither were they so long in captivity in Babylon, (not above fifty years) as that Zion could with propriety say, the LORD had forsaken, and forgotten her: neither were they held in such contempt and abhorrence in Babylon; nor after their return, were they held in such veneration, by kings, &c. as here mentioned: nor were their enemies

punished, as the Prophet declares they shall be, &c. And it would be wasting time to no purpose, to enquire, whether Jesus ever fulfilled this prophecy, as nothing of the kind, ever took place in his time; we therefore, cannot entertain the least doubt, of its full accomplishment by the true Messiah, whose especial mission is, to restore the dispersed sheep of Israel, plant them safely in their own land, and subdue their enemies; and thereby, bring the whole world to the knowledge of the One true God. Amen.

The ninth prophecy, commences chapter list. verse 1st. and is continued to the end of verse 12th of chapter liid.

Before we proceed, it will be necessary to observe, that there are three following paragraphs, beginning with the same expression: viz. Hearken to me; Attend to me; Hearken to me; it is proper therefore, to enquire into the cause of this singularity, as the learned Abarbanal observes. The solution will presently appear, when we consider, that there are three great doubts, that naturally arise in the mind of the nation concerning the impediments that obstruct, and may prevent their future redemption ever taking place.

First,

First, On account of the great diminution which they have suffered in their numbers, by persecutions, banishments, &c. during this long and dreadful captivity; so that there are now but very few to partake of it, if it should take place. Second, If the redemption is not to take place on account of the repentance, and righteousness of the nation, (as already mentioned in the course of the work, page 60, 61, &c.) but according to the absolute will and pleasure of the Supreme Being, we may ask, say they, Why God will be pleased to redeem them? and what is the reason that he will then be pleased to redeem them, since he hath not been pleased to redeem them hitherto, during this long captivity? Third, On account of the great power and strength of the nations, amidst whom they dwell; as already mentioned page 279, &c. and who no doubt, would instantly crush every attempt made towards the least innovation, or change in the balance of power; so that it would be next to an impossibility for them to assemble together from the different parts where they are dispersed in small bodies: because, such rising, would by the ruling powers, be termed rebellion, and insurrection against the state

where they are settled; and would doubtless cause no small commotion in every country where they should rise: it consequently, would quickly be prevented, and crushed in the bud: they therefore, cannot morally hope for any thing else, but to remain as they are, dispersed in all parts, and subject to the state where they reside.

Now, in order to remove the doubts raised by these impediments; the Prophet makes use of those expressions, in the forementioned paragraphs: for as to the first, viz. their diminution he says, "Hearken unto me, ye that pursue righteousness, ye that seek the LORD." For I do not mean, says he, to enter into a discussion with perverse and obstinate unbelievers, who will not acknowledge the force and truth of an argument, though it stares them in the face: but with ye, who pursue righteousness: who are willing to hear, and be convinced by the force of truth; and who seek the LORD: who properly and justly attribute every occurrence to the immediate providence of God: it is to you, that I say, "Look unto the rock, from whence ye were hewn, and to the hollow of the cave, whence ye were digged.

Look

Look unto Abraham your father; and unto Sarah, who bore you: for I called him * a single person, and I blessed, and I multiplied him." I did not call a whole nation, or a great and numerous family, but a single person; one who continued so long childless, as almost to despair of ever having any: and as I then miraculously blessed and multiplied him: even thus shall the nation, after having been so long in captivity, as almost to despair of ever being redeemed; be visited, blessed, and multiplied, verse 3d. "Therefore the LORD shall console Zion: he shall console all her desolations: and he shall make her wilderness like Eden; and her desert like the garden of the LORD: joy and gladness shall be found in her; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

Having thus answered the first objection or doubt, he proceeds to notice the second, as in verse 4th, "Attend unto me, O my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation; for the Law from me shall proceed; and my sentence will I cause to give rest, (and be) a light to the peoples." You, (says the Prophet in the person of the Supreme Being)

* Gen. xii. 1.

who

who are my own people, and my own nation, ought to put confidence in my promises, and to believe, that the decree which I have decreed for your redemption, as well as that for your captivity, shall most certainly be accomplished; although the captivity hath continued thus long; and which decree, shall also give rest to the nations; shall cause peace to reign on earth, as the Prophet says elsewhere, “And they shall beat their swords into plow-shares,” &c. *Isai. ii. 4.* For, “My righteousness is at hand; my salvation is gone forth; and mine arm shall dispense judgement to the peoples: me the distant nations shall expect; and to mine arm they shall look with confidence.” The latter part of this verse, may be said to be fulfilling at this present time; for all the nations, Christians as well as Jews, seem to talk with confidence of the speedy restoration of the nation, and the sudden appearance of the true Messiah. The Prophet, in confirmation of the truth of his prediction, proceeds to declare that, the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sooner be dissolved and perish, than that the faithful completion of God’s promises to deliver his people,

people, should fail, verse 6th*. “ Lift up unto the heavens your eyes; and look down unto the earth beneath: verily the heavens shall dissolve, like smoke; and the earth shall wax old, like a garment; and its inhabitants shall perish in like manner: but my salvation shall endure for ever; and my righteousness shall not decay.”

Having thus answered the second objection, he proceeds to the third, viz. the subjection they are in to the nations, as in verse 7th, 8th, “ Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law:” Ye, who know and pursue righteousness, as mentioned in the first paragraph, in answer to the first objection; and who believe that my law and sentence shall be fulfilled, as in the second answer: ye who thus believe both these promises, “ Fear not the reproach of wretched man; neither be ye borne down by their revilings †: for

* And thus says the Prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. 36. “ If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.”

† How fully this hath been accomplished, need not be insisted upon; as the contempt the nation is held in, is well known.

the

the moth shall consume them, like a garment; and the worm shall eat them, like wool: but my righteousness shall endure for ever; and my salvation to the age of ages." This answer, is perfectly conformable to the objection: for the Prophet, by the images of the moth and worm, shews, that as those small diminutive creatures, will consume and destroy a large garment, or a great quantity of wool, so shall they who are weak, and but few in number, prevail over those strong and powerful nations, who oppressed and persecuted them: and from whom, his righteousness and salvation shall never after depart.

The Prophet, verse 9th, speaks in his own person, which is continued to the end of verse 11th. For, as God in the three preceding sentences, had commanded him to promise deliverance to the nation, &c. and had made use of the expressions, " Mine arm shall dispense judgement," &c. He also in his address, makes use of the same expression, and by way of prayer, entreats him, to exert that powerful arm, as he hath promised, saying, " Awake, awake, clothe thyself with strength, O arm of the LORD! Awake

as

as in days of old, the ancient generations.
 Art thou not the same, that smote Rahab*,
 that wounded the dragon? Art thou not the
 same, that dried up the sea, the waters of the
 great deep? that made the depths of the sea
 a path for the redeemed to pass through:
 Thus may the ransomed of the LORD return,
 and come to Zion with loud acclamation:
 and everlasting gladness crown their heads;
 joy and gladness shall they obtain; and sorrow
 and sighing shall flee † away."

The Prophet having thus delivered his
 ejaculation, God immediately answers him,
 "I, even I, am he that comforteth you:"
 and therefore, "Who art thou, that thou
 shouldest fear wretched man, that dieth; and
 the son of man, that shall become as grass?
 And shouldest forget the LORD thy maker,
 who stretched out the heavens, and formed
 the earth; and shouldest every day be in
 continued fear, because of the fury of the
 oppressor, as if he were just ready to destroy:

* Egypt.

† It must be observed, that the exact words contained in
 verse 11, have already occurred in chap. xxxv. 10. But
 there, the passage must be considered, as a promise; and
 here the Prophet makes use of it by way of prayer, that,
 that very promise might be fulfilled in every particular.

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and where now is the fury of the oppressor? Ye stand in awe and fear of the surrounding nations who oppress you, and try all human means to escape from their fury: not considering that, they are but mortals, who may be suddenly cut off as grass: and at the same time are not afraid, of offending God thy maker: and dost forget that, unless he permits them to oppress thee for thy sins, it is not in their power to injure thee: on the contrary, it is in his power, to convert their very enmity into love, as Solomon says, "When a man's ways are approved by the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7. And therefore, hadst thou repented, and "Cried aloud, he would have hastened to loosen *the bonds of* the captive, that he may not die in the dungeon, and that his bread may not fail. For I am the LORD thy God; who stilleth the sea, when the waves thereof roar: the LORD of Hosts is his name." By this image, the Prophet shews that, both the oppressions which they suffer, and the tranquillity which they at times enjoy, and which he so forcibly describes, by the stilling of the roaring waves of the sea; are not the effects of

of accident, but proceed from the particular providence of God; who hath, and will still continue to watch over them till the time of their redemption, which he describes by the image of stretching the heavens, &c. as in verse 16th. "I have put my words in thy mouth; and with the shadow of my hand have I covered thee." I have hitherto protected thee, amidst the numerous enemies who surround thee; and that, because of my law; for I have put my words in thy mouth, that thou mayest continually speak of the words that I have commanded * thee: thus shalt thou continue to be protected, till the time comes, "To stretch out the heavens, and to lay the foundations of the earth; and to say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

After this great, this important, and animating promise, the Prophet says, "Rouse thyself, rouse thyself up, arise, O Jerusalem! who hast drunken from the hand of the LORD, the cup of his fury: the dregs of the cup of trembling, thou hast drunken, thou hast wrung them out. There is not one to lead her, of all her sons which she hath brought forth; neither is there one to support her by the hand, of all the sons

* Deut. vi. 7.

which she hath brought up. These two things* have befallen thee; who shall bemoan thee? desolation, and destruction, the famine, and the sword; who shall comfort thee? Thy sons lie astonished; they are cast down; at the head of the streets, like the wild bull taken in the toils: drenched to the full with the fury of the LORD, with the rebuke of thy God."

By this bold image of the cup of God's wrath, the Prophet exhorts them to consider that, all the troubles which they have experienced, have been the consequence of the dreadful denunciations of God against them, for their heinous offences committed against

* By this expression, the Prophet points to the two captivities; namely, that of Babylon, and the present; during which, they have suffered the four great afflictions of desolation, destruction, &c. And in verse 20, the Prophet mentions a fifth also, viz. Thy sons lie astonished, &c. This, is the real meaning of the expression of the Prophet; the which, if Bishop Lowth had rightly understood, he would not have been so precipitate in censuring the Chaldee Paraphrast, (who it is to be supposed, was much better acquainted with the idiom, phraseology, and form of the Prophetic language than himself) as he has, for not rightly understanding the passage, as he absurdly thought; but which is the consequence of the system he has formed, that the Prophet is speaking of the Babylonish captivity; than which, nothing can be falser. See Notes on Isai. chap. li. 19.

him,

him, who therefore, caused them to drink the cup to the dregs; that is, hath brought the full measure of all the inflictions denounced against them in the law, upon them: for this is the meaning of this image, here employed by the Prophet with great force and sublimity; where Jerusalem is represented as staggering under the effects of it, destitute of that assistance, which she might naturally expect, and hope for from her children; not one of them being able to support, or lead her: for they, abject and amazed, lie at the head of every street, overwhelmed with the greatness of their distress; like the wild bull intangled in a net, in vain struggling to rend it, and extricate himself. This, (as Bishop Lowth observes) is Poetry of the first order, Sublimity of the highest proof.

He then observes that, when they shall have received the full measure of their punishment for all their sins, God will say to the nation, "Therefore hear now this, O thou afflicted; and thou drunken, but not with wine. Thus saith thy LORD the LORD, and thy God, who avengeth his people." For while in captivity, thou didst exclaim, "O LORD, our God! other lords, besides thee,

thee, have had dominion over us." (As observed page 176.) But at that time, the LORD alone will be thy Lord, and thy God; who will plead thy cause, and avenge thee of thine enemies; and will cause thee to hear these gladfome tidings, "Behold, I have taken from thy hand the cup of trembling; the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt drink of it again no more. But I will put it into the hand of them who oppressed thee; who said to thy soul, Bow down that we may go over: and thou didst lay down thy body, as the ground; and as the street, to them that pass along."

The Prophet, thus shews the perfect restoration of the nation, and the punishment of their enemies; and also informs us that, they shall no more drink of the cup; shall no more go into captivity: and therefore says, chap. liid. verse 1st. "Awake, awake, be clothed with thy strength, O Zion: clothe thyself with thy glorious garments, O Jerusalem, thou holy city! For no more shall enter into thee, the uncircumcised and the polluted. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit (on thy lofty seat) O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive

captive daughter of Zion." By the expression of the uncircumcised and polluted entering: the Prophet plainly shews, that none of the nations shall ever more, have power over, or be able to oppress the nation: which is an evident proof, that they are no more, after the restoration here foretold, ever to go into captivity: this perfectly agrees with what he says, (chap. lii. verse 11th.) that their heads shall be crowned with everlasting gladness.

In verse 3d, he points to the cause of their captivity, and the manner of their redemption. "For thus saith the LORD: For nought were ye sold; and not with money shall ye be ransomed." By this figure, the Prophet shews that they were carried captive as a punishment for the enormous crimes they had committed; and therefore, justly observes, that they were sold for nought; they were considered as insignificant, as a base and worthless slave, whom his master is glad to get rid of at any rate, even for the merest trifle; being reckoned only an useless burthen: as the Psalmist says, "Thou hast sold thy people for nought, and hast not increased (thy wealth) by their price." (Psalm.

xliv.

xliv. 13.) And that at the time of their redemption, they will likewise be redeemed without money: that is, without repentance, good deeds, or any merit of theirs; but solely by the absolute will and pleasure of the Supreme Being, after they have received the full measure of their punishment; as already mentioned*; for the Prophet, by his prescience, clearly forsook that, they would not by a sincere repentance, be deserving of redemption: and therefore, compares their redemption to their captivity: that is, that they would be equally sinful at the time of their redemption, as at the time of their captivity.

He then proceeds to state the three different captivities, as they may be called †: viz. that of Egypt, Babylon, and the present; as in verse 4, and 5. “For thus saith the LORD: My people went down to Egypt, aforetime, to sojourn there: but the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. And now, what have I to do here, saith the LORD: since my people are taken away for nought: (and) they that bear rule over them, make their boast of it, saith the LORD: and

* Page 60, &c.

† Though the present, is properly a continuation of the Babylonish captivity.

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continually every day my name is blasphemed."

For they were not carried captive into Egypt, but only went to sojourn there, at the direct invitation of Pharaoh*: the Egyptians therefore, who kept them afterwards in bondage, most grossly abused the rights of hospitality, by detaining them: he therefore, observes, "My people went down to Egypt," &c. They went down of their own accord, and were unjustly enslaved there. But even this plea, speaking of the Babylonish captivity, the Assyrian had not: for they did not go down to Babylon, but were taken by violence from their own land, and carried away captive: so that the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. As to the third, or present captivity, he observes, "And now, what have I more to do, saith the LORD," &c. For this captivity not only includes both the former calamities; but a much greater one, viz. the profanation of God's holy name: for the Romans, who destroyed Jerusalem, acted as the Assyrians did, by violently carrying them away captive: and numbers of the nation afterwards

* Gen. xlv. 18, &c.

left the holy land, and went and sojourned among the nations, as they did when they went down to Egypt, and which has been the cause of a most dreadful misfortune, which hath rendered this captivity by far more terrible than the others: for by their being thus dispersed, and subjected to the different nations, who make their boast of it; saying, that they were thus driven out of their country, and scattered over the face of the earth, because they had crucified the lord of life, and saviour of the world, by whom all things were made: the consequence is; that the name of God is thereby continually profaned and blasphemed: for as Dr. Priestley observes *, “ If it be impiety to reduce a God to the state of a man, is it not equally *impious* to raise any man to a state of equality with God, that God who has declared, that he will not give his glory to another, who has no equal, and who in this respect styles himself a jealous God? This you say, respects the gods of the Heathens. But what were the Heathen gods, but either the sun, moon, and stars, or dead

* Letters to D. H. H. in answer to his animadversions on the history of the corruptions of Christianity, page 103.

men,

men, all creatures of God, deriving their power from him? And if Christ be not God, he must be a creature of God too; for there can be no medium between creature and creator." Hence, it is manifest, that God's name cannot be exposed to greater contempt and blasphemy, than by making any one equal to, or associate with him: against which, he has so solemnly declared, "To whom then will ye liken me? And to whom shall I be equaled? saith the Holy One." (Isai. xl. 25.) "To whom will ye liken me, and equal me? And to whom will ye compare me, that we may be like?" (Ibid. xlv. 5.) This prophanation of God's name, the Prophet seems to point out to us, as the principal cause of their redemption, exactly conformable to what Moses says*: and Ezekiel (in chap. xxxvith. versé 6th, says) "Thus saith the LORD God: Not for your sakes do I this, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name, which ye † have profaned among the nations, whither ye are gone," &c. And therefore, when the redemption takes place, God's people will be confirmed in the truth of the

* See page 60.

† See page 61. Note.

doctrine, which they had always embraced, concerning the Unity of God, and the truth of the eternal existence of his name, as the only true God; when his name shall no longer be thus profaned by false doctrines and opinions: as they will know, and be convinced of the truth of the promises delivered by the Prophets, when they see the full accomplishment of them in the redemption and salvation of the nation, and not in confirmation of false and erroneous principles, as in verse 6th. “ Therefore shall my people know my name: for in that day (they shall see) that I am he that did speak; and lo! here I am!” I am the same that promised, and spake of their redemption to the Prophets; and I am the self same now: for I have not undergone any change, nor associated any other with me.

The Prophet then in most sublime language, describes the sudden appearance of the messenger, bringing the long expected, and so much wished for news, of the deliverance and salvation of God’s people from this dreadful captivity, verse 7th. “ How beautiful appear on the mountains the feet of the joyful messenger; of him, that publisheth

lisheth peace! of the joyful messenger of good: of him that announceth salvation! of him, that sayeth unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" This description of the proclamation of the joyful tidings, is highly poetical: and in order to understand it rightly, it is necessary, that we enquire into the meaning of the different expressions made use of by the Prophet, and that of Nahum, which some take to be an imitation of this very pleasing image*: for Isaiah makes use of four different expressions: whereas Nahum only says, "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth† peace." But the true reason of this, as I shall shew, is, that Isaiah speaks of the future restoration and salvation of Israel, as also of the peaceable state of all the nations of the earth, in the time of the Messiah; and therefore, makes use of different expressions; which may not improperly be called general and particular. The former, to all the nations at large, and the latter, to the Jews in particular. For to the nations he says, "Of him, that publisheth peace;

* Lowth on Isai. lii. 7. Note.

† Nahum. ii. 1.

of the joyful messenger of good.” Because he will publish universal peace to all the world; so that, “ Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more* .” And he will likewise be “ the joyful messenger of good :” as by this love and universal peace, all mankind will be brought to the knowledge of the one true God; which is the only true, real, and desirable good. But to the Jews, he proclaims the glad tidings of God’s salvation, in the deliverance of his people; and also informs them, that their God is acknowledged by all, and reigneth over all the nations; according to what the Prophet Obadiah said, “ And the kingdom shall be,” &c. for which reason, he makes use of the verb *נשׂא* *Publisheth*, but twice, to the four different expressions; once to the nations in general, and once to the Jews in particular. But Nahum, only said, “ Behold upon the mountains,” &c. as above mentioned, because his mission, was only to inform the nation of the destruction of Ninevah, and that they had nothing more to fear from the king of Assyria.

* Isai. ii. 4.

We now, are to enquire, what, or who this joyful messenger of glad tidings is : for some are * of opinion, that it is only used as an image, to denote the manifestation of the appearance of the Messiah, and the restoration of the nation ; which will be so notorious all over the world, as if the messengers ascended on all the high mountains to proclaim, and publish it. But the Rabbins † are of opinion, that it denotes Elijah the Prophet ‡, who is to be the messenger of the joyful tidings ; according to what the Prophet Malachi says, (chap. iiii. verse 23d.) “ Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and

* Vide Kimchi in Locum.

† When I say the RABBINS, I wish it to be understood as used to denote the ancient Doctors, the Talmudists, &c.

‡ It was this, no doubt, that gave rise to the Christian's scheme, of John the baptist coming in the spirit and power of Elijah. How little the character of John, agreed with the mission of Elijah, as described by the Prophet Malachi, need not be insisted upon ; as the effect which John's preaching wrought, was so diametrically opposite, to that which Elijah is to accomplish : for he is to bring universal peace to mankind ; whereas Christ as well as his followers, lighted up the torch of war and blood shed ; and were the cause of brother rising against brother ; and children against their parents, &c. as already mentioned page 119, 120, &c.

terri-

terrible day of the LORD," &c. And as he will appear before the resurrection, the Prophet observes immediately after, "Lo! the voice of thy watchmen: together shall they lift up the voice, and sing; for face to face * shall they see when the LORD returneth to Zion." For the watchmen denote the Prophets, (See Ezek. iii. 17. xxxiii. 6, 7, &c.) who had prophesied the redemption of the nation, as well as their captivity and afflictions: the Prophet therefore informs us, that when they shall arise at the resurrection, and behold the glorious restoration of the nation, their hearts will naturally exult with joy, and they all together will give thanks and praise to God, for the accomplishment of the prophecies, delivered by them, in their former life time: and this is, what is meant by the expression, עין בעין יראו *They shall see eye to eye*; for they will then with their corporeal eye, see the accomplishment of what they had before only seen with the intellectual eye. And which is also the reason, that the noun קוֹל *voice*, is repeated; which has so greatly puzzled Bishop Lowth, who not being able to enter into the true

* Heb. Eye to eye.

spirit of the prophetic language, pronounces it a mistake *; and would therefore read כל

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* This is the case, with all those that form New Translations: who as soon as they meet with any thing, that they, through their want of a thorough knowledge in the sacred language, (so different in its genius from all others) cannot instantly comprehend, and adapt to the fastidious nicety of English metre; or that will not easily yield to their system, to pronounce it a mistake; the assistance of manuscripts is called in, and the poor printed text is immediately discarded. This brings to my mind a reflection that I have read somewhere, and which I shall relate in the words of the Author, as far as my memory will permit. "As there is not absolutely a very great difference between פְּרוֹת *Kins*, and פְּחוֹת *Princes*. Could there not have been some, who in those amazing manuscripts, (made use of by Dr. Kennicot) might have imported this latter word? I know nothing of any such thing; but let us suppose it for a moment. I immediately represent myself as a copyist of the last century; or perhaps my contemporary, who does his utmost to be expeditious in framing on the printed text, a very respectable manuscript for its ANTIQUITY. As he has been taught to read, write, and understand Hebrew indifferently, he finds in Amos iv. 1. "Hear this word פְּרוֹת הַבָּשָׁן *Ye kins of Basban*." He stops, reflects, and instantly concludes, this cannot be: "Surely, says he to himself, it is a fault; but פְּחוֹת denotes *Princes*. Let us write it: it is more noble "to address the word to the *Princes of Basban*, than to the "kine of that country." Thus, פְּרוֹת is unregistered, and פְּחוֹת recorded. How many thousand variations are of the same kind!

I now follow the steps of this manuscript, and see it some few years after, take its flight towards some famous library.

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All, instead of קל Voice. But his reason, though plausible, is highly fallacious: for the repetition of the word קל is proper and necessary; as the true meaning of it is, as if the Prophet had said, "Lo! the voice of thy watchmen;" Behold, the voice of thy watchmen; their prophetic orations, are now accomplished: and therefore, together shall they lift up the voice, and sing praise to God for his goodness, in thus

It is received, and treated there with a respect due only to venerable old age. They have given it a date, and that is sufficient. At last, they entrust some of the curious with it, that they may extract some variations from it. Here it is where my imagination forms a singular scene. I think I see five or six waggish boys round about their master, comparing, by cursing and swearing, some old ragged copies with the printed text. One of them having my manuscript before him, falls upon Amos, and finds in his copy פחור Princes: and going back to the printed text, he reads there, פרות Kine. Ah! master, he exclaims, What horror! The Hebrew Text imports *kine*. The old pretended Hebraist runs to it, turns his spying glass, verifies by himself the two lessons, and applauds both the ignorance of his pupil, and that of the copyist. A variation of the utmost consequence! an acclamation of triumph; *an excommunication* of the printed text: a consecration *without reserve* of the manuscripts. —Is not this dream of my author very pleasant, and highly diverting? I am sure it must be extremely edifying to the profound critics.

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confirming what they aforetime had foretold.

The Prophet then addresses himself to the holy land, and exhorts it to praise, and give thanks to God, and that, for two reasons; one on account of the people, and the other, on account of the land, verse 9th. "Burst forth into joy, shout together, ye ruins of Jerusalem! for the LORD hath comforted his people: he hath redeemed Jerusalem." And as the redemption of the nation, will be known in the whole world, the Prophet says, verse 10th. "The LORD hath made bare his holy arm, in the sight of all the nations: and all the ends of the earth, shall see the salvation of our God."

The Prophet proceeds to describe the return of the nation, by way of exhortation for their departure from among the nations, where they are dispersed, verse 11th. "Depart, depart ye, go ye out from thence; touch no polluted thing: Go ye out from the midst of her, be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the LORD!" For ye have no occasion to be armed with swords and spears, to defend yourselves; but only to bear the vessels of the LORD; to keep his law and

commandments : ye therefore have nothing to fear, for, “ Verily not in haste shall ye go forth; and not by flight shall ye march along : for the LORD shall go before you, and the God of Israel shall bring up your rear.” Ye shall not go forth in haste, as ye did when ye came out of Egypt, as mentioned Exod. xii. 33. “ And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste,” &c. Again, “ For thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste.” Deut. xvi. 3. Neither shall ye march by flight, as one that is afraid of his enemies, as ye were of Sanballat and others, at your return from Babylon; and that, because the LORD himself will go before you, and the God of Israel will bring up your rear : so that on no side whatever, will ye have any thing to fear. This, as well as the subject matter of the whole prophecy, plainly shews to a demonstration, that it never hath been fulfilled : and that of course, the Prophet did not allude to the Babylonish captivity, as Christian commentators in general assert : for not one of the conditions here foretold, were ever accomplished at their return from Babylon :

Babylon: for their enemies were not punished: nor did they prevail over them: neither were they crowned with everlasting joy and gladness; so as not to experience any more trouble, oppression, or captivity. On the contrary, their enemies, the uncircumcised, persecuted them most cruelly; and at last drove them entirely out of their own country, which they have never since been able to recover to this day. Moreover, the Prophet mentions three captivities, as shown in the explanation of the 4th and 5th verses of chapter liid. All which, is a manifest proof, that the Prophet did not point to their return from Babylon.

And as we do not find it recorded in the New Testament, that any of these events took place, during Jesus his short stay on earth: it must be evident to the meanest capacity, that he could not be the Messiah, here foretold by the Prophet, who was to accomplish those great, those glorious, and important events; which were likewise to be preceded by a messenger announcing universal peace to mankind, and salvation to Israel: because we have for almost eighteen hundred years, had evident and ocular demonstration

monstration of the direct contrary: as scarcely any thing, but wars and bloodshed, have stained the annals of history for that period. And at this hour*, almost all Europe is engaged in a most horrid and dreadful war; in which, such enormous excesses are committed, as is scarce credible of human beings: especially of civilized mortals, enlightened by Revelation. Whence it is evident, that it remains to be fulfilled at the restoration of the Jews by the true Messiah, when it shall please God in his mercy, to redeem them.

* The year 1793.

END OF VOL. I.

